NATION

Bahraich violence: 5 suspects held, 2 suffer gunshot injuries

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BUSINESS

Investors' wealth erodes by ₹6 lakh cr as market slumps

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SPORTS

Devon Conway's 91 leads NZ to 180/3

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 18 OCTOBER 2024 | FRIDAY | BENGALURU | 14 RABI UL SANI, 1446 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 263 | Pages: 8

PHOTO: X/@XFACTOR

One Direction's Liam Payne falls to death from hotel

BUENOS AIRES, 17 OCT

Former One Direction singer Liam Payne, 31, whose chart-topping British boy band generated a global following of swooning fans, was found dead Wednesday after falling from a hotel balcony in Buenos Aires, officials said. Buenos Aires police said in a statement that Payne fell from the third floor of the Casa Sur Hotel in the trendy Palermo neighborhood of Argentina's capital. Payne was one of five members of One Direction, which formed when they each auditioned for the British singing competition series 'The X Factor' in 2010, two years after Payne's first attempt to get on the show. *—PTI*

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CJI proposes Justice Sanjiv Khanna as successor

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud has set in motion the process of appointment of his successor after he recommended the name of Justice Sanjiv Khanna, the senior-most judge after the outgoing CJI, to the Centre. According to sources, CJI Chandrachud had on Wednesday written a letter of recommendation to the Union Law Ministry naming Justice Khanna as his successor. Justice Khanna will assume charges on 11 November, after the retirement of CJI Chandrachud on 10 November, 2024, after serving for two years at the helm of the Indian judiciary. *—PTI*

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Don't politicise murder, we want justice: Baba's son

MUMBAI, 17 OCT

Congress MLA Zeeshan Siddique on Thursday said the killing of his father and NCP leader Baba Siddique should not be politicised and asserted his family needs justice. Baba Siddique, 66, was shot at in Nirmal Nagar in Mumbai's Bandra area on 12 October by three people. He succumbed to injuries at nearby Lilavati Hospital soon after. In a post on X, Zeeshan Siddique said his father lost his life protecting and saving the lives and homes of poor innocent people. Baba Siddique, a former state minister, had joined the Ajit Pawar-led NCP. *—PTI*

The Mumbai-bound Lokmanya Tilak Express that left Agartala this morning derailed at Dibalong station in Assam at about 3.55pm. Eight coaches, including the power car and the engine of the train, got derailed. However, no casualty or major injuries have been reported ***PHOTO: PTI***

Sec 6A of Citizenship Act constitutionally valid: SC

It grants citizenship to those who entered Assam before 1971

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Supreme Court on Thursday upheld the constitutional validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act which grants Indian citizenship to immigrants from Bangladesh who entered Assam before 25 March, 1971.

Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud and Justices Surya Kant, MM Sundresh, and Manoj Misra further underscored the necessity for more robust policy measures to curb illegal immigration.

Section 6A was inserted in 1985 into the Citizenship Act of 1955 following the signing of the Assam accord between the then Rajiv Gandhi government at the Centre and the agitating groups led by Prafulla Mahanta including All Assam Students Union in the state.

According to the provision, all those who came to Assam on or after 1 January, 1966, but before 25 March, 1971, from Bangladesh at the time of commencement of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 1985, and since then are residents of Assam, can register for Indian citizenship.

CJI DY Chandrachud (centre) underscored the necessity for more robust policy measures to curb illegal immigration ***PHOTO: SCREENGRAB***

While the CJI, Justices Kant, Sundresh, and Misra upheld the constitutional validity of Section 6A, Justice JB Pardiwala dissented in a minority verdict.

Holding the cut-off date of 25 March, 1971 as rational, the CJI, said Section 6A was not violative of Articles 6 and 7, which stipulates a cut-off date for conferring citizenship to migrants from east and west Pakistan at the "commencement of the Constitution".

He said that the Assam Accord was a political solution to the problem of illegal migration and Section 6A was the legislative solution. The majority held that the Parliament had the legislative competence to enact the provision.

The bench also held that the singling out of Assam from other states that shared a larger border with Bangladesh was rational as the percentage of immigrants among the local population in Assam was higher there than in other border states. The impact of 40 lakh migrants in Assam is greater than the 57 lakh migrants in West Bengal because the land area in Assam is much less compared to West Bengal.

The majority also held that the cut-off date of 25 March, 1971, was rational, as it was the date when Pakistan started Operation Searchlight against Bangladesh movement in East Pakistan.

"Although Section 6A conferred citizenship rights exclusively to immigrants arriving before this cut-off date, there seems to still be an ongoing influx of migrants through various border states of India. Due to porous borders and incomplete fencing, this unceasing migration imposes a significant challenge," the majority verdict held.

The All Assam Students Union (AASU), which spearheaded a six-year-long agitation against illegal immigrants in Assam in 1979-85, welcomed the Supreme Court judgment. *—PTI*

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7 OCT'S MASTERMIND

Israel's strike on Gaza school kills Hamas Chief Sinwar

JERUSALEM, 17 OCT

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday confirmed that Hamas Chief Yahya Sinwar, is dead, the Times of Israel reported.

He was killed an Israeli airstrike on a school sheltering displaced Palestinians killed at least 15 people, including five children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

The military said in a statement that three militants were killed during operations in Gaza.

Sinwar was one of the chief architects of Hamas' attack on Israel on 7 October, 2023, and Israel has vowed to kill him since the beginning of its retaliatory campaign in Gaza. Throughout the war, Sinwar has been in hiding.

For years Hamas' top figure in Hamas, Sinwar was chosen as its top leader following the assassination of Ismael Haniyeh in July in an apparent Israeli strike in the Iranian capital Tehran. Israel has also claimed to have killed the

Yahya Sinwar ***PHOTO: X/@REALSINWAR***

head of Hamas' military wing Mohammed Deif in an airstrike, but the group has said he survived.

The report came as Israeli forces continued a more than week-old major air and ground assault in the Jabaliya refugee camp in northern Gaza, where the Abu Hussein school was hit Thursday.

Fares Abu Hamza, head of Gaza Health Ministry's local emergency unit, confirmed the toll from the strike and said dozens of people were wounded. He said the nearby Kamal Adwan Hospital was struggling to treat the casualties. *—PTI*

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Yatnal gets arrest warrant over Minister's wife's plaint

BENGALURU, 17 OCT

A Bengaluru court for people representative has issued a Non Bailable Warrant (NBW) against BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal for not appearing before court over his alleged statement on Karnataka Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao's wife Tabu Rao.

BJP MLA Yatnal was to appear before the court on Wednesday for his alleged statement that 'there is half Pakistan in Dinesh Gundu Rao's family'.

As Basanagouda patil Yatnal didn't appear KN Shivakumar, Single Judge bench issued NBW against MLA and posted matter 28 October.

Basanagouda Patil Yatnal

On 5 October, Tabassum Rao, wife of Karnataka Health Minister lodged a complaint with the Karnataka State Women's Commission against BJP's State unit social media cell, citing derogatory comments made about her in a social media post. *—ANI*

SAINI TAKES OATH

Nayab Singh Saini on Thursday took oath as Haryana CM at a ceremony in Panchkula attended by PM Narendra Modi. Thirteen BJP MLAs took oath as ministers, of which just two are women ***PHOTO: PTI >>>More on Page 3***

Hooch tragedy kills 25 in dry Bihar, 12 arrested

PATNA, 17 OCT

In one of the biggest hooch tragedies in Bihar since the state went dry in 2016, at least 25 people have died after consuming spurious liquor in the adjoining districts of Siwan and Saran, a top officer said on Thursday.

Director General of Police Alok Raj said that while Siwan accounted for 20 fatalities, five deaths have been reported from Saran even as 12 people have been arrested for allegedly selling spurious liquor and they were likely to be "tried under the most stringent laws and punished by the court".

"The name of a liquor mafioso has cropped up. He happened to be involved in a similar case earlier and is currently out on bail," he added.

According to officials in the two districts, tragedy befell Maghar and Auriya panchayats of Siwan and Mashrakh in Saran on Tuesday when a number of locals treated themselves to liquor, the sale of which was completely banned in the state by the Nitish Kumar government way back in April 2016.

The officials also said that more than 20 people were still battling for life at hospitals, many of them having lost their eyesight as a side effect of the spurious liquor.

State Prohibition Minister Ratnesh Sada vowed to bring in a stringent "CCA" (crime control act) to rein in liquor mafia, but snapped at reporters when asked whether he saw the latest incident as a "failure" of the much-touted prohibition law.

Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav came out with an angry statement saying, "Hooch deaths have become a routine in Bihar but never ever has a high-ranking official faced the music for the lapse."

Notably, the state government had confirmed more than 150 deaths on account of hooch since the ban on liquor came into force. In 2022, Saran's Mashrakh reported the worst such tragedy in which, as per the state government about 40 people had died. *—PTI*

8 social media handles shut over bomb threat to airlines

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Over half-a-dozen social media handles that issued hoax bomb threats to multiple Indian airliners this week have been suspended or blocked by cyber security agencies till now, official sources said Thursday.

The agencies have also found some common lines and words used in these fake threats like "bombs", "blood will spread everywhere", "explosive devices", "this is not a joke" and "you will all die" and "bomb rakhwa dia hai" among others. The sources said the agencies, apart from getting police FIRs registered in each such hoax bomb messages case, have enhanced 'cyber patrolling' on the social media to check for possible linkages or trends where threats are being posted online leading to grounding or diversion of the aircraft. *—PTI*

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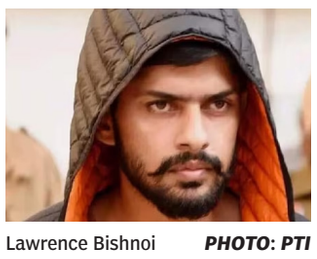
India claims Canada denied extradition of Bishnoi's men

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

India had requested the extradition of Lawrence Bishnoi gang members and syndicates associated with them from Canada several years ago as well as recently, but received no response from Ottawa, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday.

India said the current diplomatic row with Canada has been precipitated by the Trudeau government's "baseless" allegations, and reiterated that "no evidence" has been shared in support of Ottawa's serious allegations against New Delhi. India said the row with Canada has been precipitated by the Trudeau's "baseless" allegations, and reiterated that "no evidence" has been shared in support of Ottawa's serious allegations against New Delhi.

Testifying before the public inquiry into foreign interference in federal electoral processes and democratic institutions, Trudeau on Wednesday acknowledged that he had only intelligence and no "hard evidentiary proof" when he alleged the involvement of Indian government agents in the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar last year.



Lawrence Bishnoi ***PHOTO: PTI***

Trudeau claimed the Indian diplomats were collecting information on Canadians who are in disagreement with the Narendra Modi government and passing it to the highest levels within the Indian government and criminal organisations like the Lawrence Bishnoi gang.

On a query on extradition requests from India, the MEA spokesperson said that besides the 26 extradition requests, there are several "provisional arrest requests of several criminals, which are also pending with the Canadian side". The relations between the two countries came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations last year of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar's killing. *—PTI*

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RAICHUR VARSITY TOO

ST schools to be named after Valmiki

CM Siddaramaiah during Valmiki Jayanthi event at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru, on Wednesday; Folk artistes perform ***PHOTOS: MOHAMMED ASAD***

BENGALURU, 17 OCT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday announced that all Scheduled Tribe (ST) residential schools in the State and the Raichur University will be named after Maharishi Valmiki.

He made this announcement after inaugurating the Valmiki Jayanti programme, organised by the Department of Backward Classes Welfare here. Siddaramaiah also criticised BJP, alleging despite being in power at the Centre and in several states, the saffron party has not implemented Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) policies anywhere.

"Our government was the first to reserve budget funds proportionate to the SC/ST population through these schemes. I initiated the concept of hostels for marginalised communities, and I will ensure there is one in every hobli," he said. Further, he, called out BJP, accusing it of opposing welfare schemes and "merely paying lip service" to the idea of equality. "True equality can't come without addressing economic and social disparities, as Dr BR Ambedkar warned," he said.

Siddaramaiah also urged marginalised communities to stand united and develop the courage to speak the truth. "Don't believe my words blindly. Think, reflect, and discern between truth and lies. That will be the real way to honour Maharshi Valmiki," he said. The Chief Minister also noted that historically marginalized communities like the Kuruba and Besta castes made significant contributions to literature and philosophy. *—PTI*

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DOG FESTIVAL

Pourakarmikas and volunteers hold puppies to initiate a Dog Festival organised by the Animal Husbandry Department and BBMP at BBMP Head Office in Bengaluru on Thursday
PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Hectic political activity in State ahead of bypolls

Bypolls in 3 Assembly seats are on 13 Nov; results on 23 Nov

BENGALURU, 17 OCT

With the Election Commission sounding the poll bugle in three assembly constituencies in Karnataka, hectic political activity has begun in the ruling Congress and the combined Opposition of BJP and its ally JD(S).

The bypolls will take place in Sandur, Channapatna and Shiggaon, which were necessitated by the resignation of E Tukaram, Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy and former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai from the Karnataka assembly after they won the Lok Sabha elections.

None of the parties have finalised their candidates for the three constituencies though in Channapatna, a JD(S) candidate is likely to be fielded.

Speculations are rife that the JD(S) second-in-command Kumaraswamy, who had resigned as Channapatna MLA, may field his son Nikhil Kumaraswamy.

Recently, the Union Minister had said there is pressure on him to field his son.

The bypolls will take place in Sandur, Channapatna and Shiggaon but parties are yet to finalise candidates
PHOTO: PTI

BJP state president BY Vijayendra too said the NDA candidate will be fielded in Channapatna.

On Thursday, Kumaraswamy said he had convened a meeting of his party leaders for the by-polls in three constituencies.

Regarding Channapatna, the former CM said he has asked the BJP leaders to discuss it.

In Bengaluru, Bommai called on BJP parliamentary board member BS Yediyurappa at his residence on Thursday for discussions on Shiggaon election.

About Channapatna, Bommai said the decision will be taken by Kumaraswamy and the BJP high command.

BJP has assigned Gangavathi MLA and mining baron G Janardhana Reddy as its election in charge, BJP sources told PTI.

According to him, the BJP and its ally JD(S) are most likely to announce their candidates on 22 October and on 23 or 24 October, the election in charge will be decided.

Congress has also not yet decided its candidates.

According to sources, the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee would meet in a day or two to discuss the candidates.

Later, there is a likelihood of another round of meeting of KPCC members with the party high command in Delhi, they said.

However, sources also said that in Sandur, E Tukaram's wife Annapoorna Tukaram or daughter Vandana may be fielded.

All eyes are on Channapatna assembly bypoll, where Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, who is also the Congress State President, is leaving no stone unturned. *—PTI*

NEW RESPONSIBILITIES AHEAD

Congress leader Sowmya Reddy takes charge as Karnataka Mahila Congress President in presence of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, DyCM DK Shivakumar, All India Mahila Congress President Alka Lamba and others at KPCC office in Bengaluru on Thursday
PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Women will drive Cong back to power in 2028: DKS

BENGALURU, 17 OCT

Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC President DK Shivakumar on Thursday expressed confidence that women-centred schemes of Congress government will ensure victory for Congress party in 2028 in Karnataka.

Speaking at the swearing in ceremony of Sowmya Reddy as Karnataka Mahila Congress President, he said, "Congress government has done a lot for women's empowerment. All the programmes that the Congress government launches are women centred. If we are able to communicate this well to the beneficiaries, we will come to power in 2028."

"We need to strengthen the hands of Mallikarjuna Kharge. Our first target is 2028 and then 2029. I don't know how long I will be the KPCC President but what we do when we are in power is what matters. I am aware the difficulties women face in politics, hence we have launched the programme 'Na Nayaki'. By encouraging women in politics, I am laying the foundation for women in politics. We gave six seats to women in the recent Lok Sabha elections," he added. *—Salar News*

4 die in multiple vehicle collision in Kalaburagi

KALABURAGI, 17 OCT

Four people were killed and as many injured in a multiple vehicle collision on Jewargi road here, police said on Thursday. The accident occurred on Wednesday at around 8:30 pm, they said. According to police, a motorcycle collided head-on with the truck. The impact of the collision was such that the two-wheeler got dragged by the truck for a few meters. Just then, a car which was coming from behind allegedly hit the truck. While the person riding the two-wheeler died on the spot, the pillion rider sustained grievous injuries and was admitted to the hospital. Three out of the six occupants of the car died and the others sustained injuries. "We have registered a case of accident under appropriate sections of BNS, Sharanappa SD Police Commissioner told PTI. *—PTI*

Belagavi bizman's body exhumed over suspected murder

BELAGAVI, 17 OCT

Belagavi city police have started an investigation into the death of a businessman and exhumed his body for autopsy on a complaint by his daughter who suspected her mother's involvement, police said on Thursday. Acccording to police, Santosh Padmannavar, 47, died on 9 October. His daughter Sanjana Padmannavar, 18, who was pursuing her higher studies in Bengaluru, returned home and the cremation was done according to the Lingayat tradition. Sanjana was told that her father died of cardiac arrest and, as per his wish, eyes were donated. She grew suspicious and with the help of her relatives, lodged a complaint suspecting her mother. *—PTI*

12-year-old boy washed away in drain in Haveri

HAVERI, 17 OCT

A 12-year-old boy was washed away in a drain in the district headquarter town of Haveri on Thursday morning, police said. Nivedan Gudageri slipped into the drain as he stepped on the missing slab and was washed away by the rain water. The incident took place this morning in front of the Office of the Superintendent of Police, they said. Search operations were carried out by teams of Fire Safety and Emergency Services and the local police. *—PTI*

I have a chance to become CM: Nagendra

BALLARI, 17 OCT

Congress MLA B Nagendra, who was released on bail in the multi-crore Valmiki Corporation 'scam' case, on Thursday said he has a great future as he too has a chance to become the Chief Minister of the State.

Reacting to MLA Janardhana Reddy's statement that there were 18 criminal cases against him, Nagendra told reporters that there are instances of people with 100 criminal cases becoming Chief Minister.

Nagendra resigned as the Tribal Welfare Minister after the Rs 89.63 crore scam in the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation came to light.

The Directorate of Enforcement had arrested him and he was released on bail after three and half months on Wednesday.

B Nagendra ***PHOTO: FB***

On his meeting with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, he said he explained to him about the irregularities in the Valmiki Corporation.

Regarding the scam, the Congress MLA said the irregularities gave him immense pain because he and the state government want that not a single rupee should be allowed to go.

He accused the BJP of attempting to destabilise the Congress government in Karnataka. To a question will he would become minister again, Nagendra said the matter is left to party high command. *—PTI*

Cong MLA asks govt to cancel all MUDA sites

Former minister and Congress MLA Tanveer Sait on Thursday asked the State government to cancel all the allotments of sites allotted to the beneficiaries under the controversial 50:50 scheme. Speaking to reporters, he stated that none of the sites allotted under 50:50 scheme were placed before MUDA meetings. Speaking to reporters here, he said that more than 800 sites were given without discussing at its board meetings between 2020- 2024. *—Salar News*

CBI, ED, IT shouldn't work in favour of one party: CM

BENGALURU, 17 OCT

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday said central agencies like CBI, ED and Income Tax should be impartial and not function in favour of one party.

He also said that the ruling Congress was ready to face and win 13 November bypolls in three assembly segments.

"Nagendra (former Minister B Nagendra) has told the media that he was pressurised by the ED. He also informed me that he was pressurised to name me and DK Shivakumar (Deputy Chief Minister). No agency should work in favour of a party. Whether it is CBI or ED or Income Tax, they should function impartially," Siddaramaiah told reporters.

Chief Minister was responding to former Minister B Nagendra's allegations that he was pressurised by the ED to name him and Shivakumar in the multi-crore scam in Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation.

> **I urge CM Siddaramaiah to resign today because it is a good day. They (ruling Congress) have swallowed a huge amount of money belonging to Valmiki Corporation, and today is Valmiki Jayanti.**
>
> -DV Sadananda Gowda, BJP leader

Siddaramaiah said, in all the three constituencies that will go for bypolls, Congress party is ready to face the election.

Responding to a question on his meeting Congress general secretary (Organisation) KC Venugopal, along with Shivakumar on Wednesday evening, CM said, "We discussed the upcoming bypolls."

Election Commission of India on Tuesday announced that the bypolls will be held on 13 November. *—PTI*

KHARGE'S FB HANDLED BY FOREIGNERS: BJP

BENGALURU, 17 OCT

Karnataka BJP has alleged that Congress President M Mallikarjun Kharge's social media is managed by foreign handlers, referring to a verified Facebook page in his name, a charge debunked by his son.

Kharge's son and Karnataka Minister for Electronics, IT/BT Priyank Kharge said the page is "fake" and that they have requested Facebook to take it down.

"Mallikarjun Kharge, who is in news for Waqf land grab, now has foreign handlers managing his social media. We've been warning about the foreign influence behind Congress's divisive caste-based politics, and this only confirms it. Why@khargeji?," Karnataka BJP posted on 'X'

"Why trust foreign handlers over your own people? it further asked. *—PTI*

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah (bottom right) with other ministers during Valmiki Jayanthi celebrations, in Bengaluru ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

Folk artistes perform during Valmiki Jayanthi celebrations at Vidhana Soudha, in Bengaluru, on Thursday ***PHOTOS: MOHAMMED ASAD***

Valmiki statue foundation laid in Mysuru

Dr HC Mahadevappa, State Minister for Social Welfare, laid the foundation stone for the installation of Maharshi Valmiki statue, at the new Deputy Commissioner's office in Siddarthanagar, Mysuru on Thursday. The ceremony saw a large turnout from the Valmiki community, who gathered to witness the occasion. Mahadevappa, addressing the gathering, emphasised the importance of honoring the contributions of Valmiki to Indian culture and literature. *—Salar News*

TO COST ₹1,700 PER RIDE

KIA to soon have electric flying taxis

BENGALURU, 17 OCT

Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport is set to be a key hub for cutting-edge urban air mobility solutions with Sarla Aviation joining hands with the Bengaluru International Airport Limited (BIAL) to launch electric flying taxis.

Last month, the two entities signed a statement of collaboration to explore sustainable air mobility, specifically electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft.

This initiative, developed in Karnataka, aims to revolutionise air travel by introducing seven-seater electric flying taxis, which promise faster, cleaner, and more efficient transportation.

While operations may still be two to three years away,

Sarla Aviation joins hands with Bengaluru International Airport Limited to launch electric flying taxis ***PHOTO: SARLA AVIATION***

Sarla Aviation's electric taxis promise a cleaner, quieter, and more cost-effective alternative to traditional helicopter services previously offered in Bengaluru.

Bengaluru-based company, co-founded by Adrian Schmidt, Rakesh Gaonkar and Shivam Chauhan, is at the forefront of this transformation.

Sarla Aviation plans to focus on four of India's most congested cities—Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi, and Pune -- bringing affordable electric aerial taxis to the public. The company's proposed route from Bengaluru Airport to Electronics City would take just 19 minutes, compared to the 152 minutes required by road, with a fare of Rs 1,700.

Regulatory hurdles remain, but the collaboration signals a significant step forward in addressing urban congestion through sustainable aviation technology.

With a focus on affordable, sustainable air travel, Sarla Aviation addresses the congestion challenges in India's major cities. *—PTI*

HDK to launch 'Mandya to India' 2-day job fair in City today

MANDYA, 17 OCT

Mandya, renowned for its sugar industry, is set to host a major job fair, "Mandya to India," starting this Friday under the leadership of HD Kumaraswamy, Union Minister for Heavy Industry and Steel.

Scheduled for 18-19 October, the event aims to connect job-seeking youth with top employers from across the country.

Over 150 companies are expected to participate, offering more than 3,000 job opportunities. The job fair will be held at Sir M Visvesvaraya Stadium from 10 am to 6 pm on both days.

Kumaraswamy, stated, "There is no shortage of talent in Mandya district. There

HD Kumaraswamy ***PHOTO: PTI***

are excellent educational institutions, and many young people graduate each year. My firm resolve is to provide as many job opportunities as possible for them."

The minister shared that many young people regularly approach him in search of employment.

The job fair will feature prominent companies, including Mecon, Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC), Lloyds Metals, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), and Jindal Steel, which will be conducting direct recruitment.

Meanwhile, he accused the Karnataka government of spreading lies regarding Hindustan Machine Tools (HMT) and Kudremukh Iron and Steel Company Limited (KIOCL).

He said the State government should not politicise the KIOCL issue. If there are problems, it should resolve them.

Kumaraswamy also hit out at Siddaramaiah over waterlogging and traffic disruptions in the State due to heavy rainfall, and accused the Congress government of failing to address the situation. *—ANI/PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Recognising Pali honours Buddha legacy: PM

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted that the recent recognition of Pali as a classical language honors the great heritage of Lord Buddha during his address at the International Abhidhamma Divas. He criticised previous governments for neglecting India's cultural legacy since Independence. Modi called upon the world to embrace Buddha's teachings to resolve current global conflicts. He also paid tribute to BR Ambedkar for his contributions to Buddhism and mentioned ongoing development efforts. He concluded by encouraging unity, noting India's commitment to assist countries facing challenges. *—PTI*

RG-Kar: Women march to CBI office, seek justice

KOLKATA, 17 OCT

On Thursday, hundreds of women marched to the CBI office in Salt Lake, North 24 Parganas, demanding swift justice in the RG Kar hospital rape and murder case. Organized by the little-known 'Jago Nari' group, the protesters criticized the CBI for inadequately investigating the case and echoed concerns about the state government's failure to ensure women's safety at workplaces. Despite carrying placards and chanting slogans, police barricaded the area to prevent them from entering the CGO complex, which houses the CBI. Meanwhile, junior doctors in West Bengal continued their hunger strike, now in its 13th day, protesting the incident that occurred on 9 August. *—PTI*

Cong expels media convenor Sarin over bypoll issue

T'PURAM/PALAKKAD, 17 OCT

Congress digital media convenor P Sarin, who raised a banner of protest against the party leadership over its candidate decision for the Palakkad Assembly bypoll, was expelled from the primary membership of the party on Thursday. The KPCC made this decision simultaneously as Sarin announced a press conference in Palakkad, declaring his intention to work with the Left Democratic Front (LDF) moving forward. As Sarin was holding the press conference, making damaging allegations against Congress leaders, including opposition leader VD Satheesan, Vadakara MP Shafi Parambil, and Palakkad by-election candidate Rahul Mamkootathil, the KPCC issued a press release announcing the decision of state party chief K Sudhakaran to expel Sarin from the party. Discontent had been growing within the party since the selection of Youth Congress state president Mamkootathil for the upcoming Palakkad Assembly bypoll. *—PTI*

₹3.5 cr scam: VK Singh's daughter files FIR

GHAZIABAD, 17 OCT

Yogja Singh, the daughter of former Union minister and BJP leader General (retd) VK Singh, has filed an FIR at Kavinagar police station here accusing a local businessman named Anand Prakash of committing a fraud amounting to approximately Rs 3.5 crore. "In her complaint, Singh claimed that she entered into an agreement to purchase a house at Rajnagar Colony for Rs 5.5 crore. But despite the payment of Rs 3.5 crore, the seller failed to finalise the sales deed. The agreement was made in 2014, and she provided additional funds via cheque for the property's renovation," Assistant Commissioner of Police Abhishek Srivastav said. *—PTI*

In a setback for Haryana Congress, Ajay Yadav quits

He accuses Cong of shabby treatment after Sonia left Prez post

CHANDIGARH, 17 OCT

Soon after the Haryana assembly elections, senior Congress leader and former minister Capt Ajay Singh Yadav on Thursday quit the party alleging shabby treatment after Sonia Gandhi left the post of party president.

He said he was quitting the party and also resigning as chairman of the All India Congress Committee's (AICC's) Other Backward Classes (OBC) department.

Yadav, 65 said he is disillusioned with the party high command "for treating me shabbily after Sonia Gandhi left the post of Congress President".

"I have sent my resignation letter to Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge ji from Chairman AICC OBC Department and also from primary membership of Indian National Congress party @ kharge @RahulGandhi @ SoniaGandhiiINC," Yadav posted on X.

"This decision of resigning was really hard decision with whom my family had 70 years of association as my father late Rao Abhey Singh became MLA in 1952 and there after I continued with family tradition but am disillusioned with the party high command for treating me shabbily after Sonia Gandhi left the post of Congress President @kharge @RahulGandhi @ SoniaGandhiiINC," Yadav posted on X.

Ajay Yadav was also learnt to be unhappy with Congress party over choice of several candidates for the Haryana elections *PHOTO: ANI*

In the past couple of years, Yadav is the third prominent leader to quit the Congress, the other two being Kuldeep Bishnoi and Kiran Choudhry, both of whom are with the BJP. Yadav, who is considered as the bete noire of former Haryana chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, had recently commented on the party state unit's alleged infighting ahead of the assembly polls.

Tussle in Haryana Congress for becoming the chief minister before getting the people's mandate was a big blunder, Yadav had recently said.

Yadav, whose son Chiranjeev Rao recently lost from Rewari assembly seat in the polls, had said the party should introspect for its failure in southern Haryana especially Gurugram, Rewari, Mahendragarh and Faridabad where it won just one seat as against 10 by the BJP.

Yadav was also learnt to be unhappy with his party over choice of several candidates for the Haryana polls.

The Congress leader had also went on to allege that his position as the AICC OBC department chairman was also an eyewash and toothless.

The BJP rode to power for the third consecutive term in Haryana in the recently held polls. Meanwhile, BJP had on Tuesday accused the Congress of being an anti-OBC and anti-Dalit party. *—PTI*

Nayab Singh Saini during the swearing-in as Haryana Chief Minister, in Panchkula on Thursday *PHOTO: PTI*

11 new faces in Haryana cabinet as Saini takes oath

HARYANA, 17 OCT

Hours after being sworn in, Haryana's newly elected Chief Minister, Nayab Singh Saini, on Thursday expressed gratitude to the people of the state and stated that BJP government would work with full energy and enthusiasm for good governance, equality, and the welfare of the poor.

There are 11 new faces on the 13member cabinet with 2 women. BJP MLAs, including Arti Singh Rao from Ateli, Rajesh Nagar from Tigaon, Gaurav Gautam from Palwal, Arvind Kumar Sharma from Gohana, Shyam Singh Rana from Radaur, Ranbir Singh Gangwa from Barwala, and Krishan Bedi from Narwana, also took their oaths as ministers in the Haryana government.

MLAs Krishan Lal Panwar from Israna, Rao Narbir Singh from Badshahpur, Mahipal Dhanda from Panipat, Vipul Goel from Faridabad, Shruti Choudhry from Toshan, and former Deputy CM Anil Vij from Ambala Cantt were sworn in as cabinet ministers.

BJP won 48 out of 90 seats in the Assembly elections. In a post on X, Saini thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the opportunity to serve as the "Chief Servant of Haryana." Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya administered the oath of office to Nayab Saini and his council of ministers at a ceremony held at Dussehra Ground in Sector 5, Panchkula. Meanwhile, Supreme Court dismissed a plea seeking to stay the oath ceremony of Nayab Singh Saini as the Chief Minister of Haryana. "What kind of petition is this? (The petition is) taken on board and dismissed," held a bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra. *—PTI*

> **For the third time with full majority, the BJP government will work with full energy for good governance, equality and welfare of the poor**
>
> - Nayab Singh Saini, Haryana CM

> **This government will realise the dreams of people and take the state's development to a new high**
>
> - Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

Champai Soren joined BJP recently citing insult and humiliation at the hands of JMM leader *PHOTO: PTI*

Champai promises 2.87L jobs ahead of J'khand polls

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Former Jharkhand chief minister Champai Soren wrote an open letter to the youth, promising them 2.87 lakh jobs if BJP is voted to power in the state, besides self-employment opportunities for 5 lakh people. Asserting that the future rests on the shoulders of the youth power, he said they must be nurturing dreams, hopes and aspirations from the state of Jharkhand which is barely 24 years old.

"The process of 2.87 lakh appointments will be started immediately after the BJP comes to power. Along with this, self-employment opportunities will be provided to 5 lakh youth so that such people can also join the mainstream of development, who could not get employment opportunities earlier," said Soren, who joined BJP recently citing "insult" and "humiliation" at the hands of JMM leaders.

"Many of you will be voting for the first time. A special request to those young friends is that by voting for BJP in Jharkhand, you can strengthen the hands of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said in the letter on Wednesday. *—PTI*

'Haryana debacle won't impact M'rashtra polls'

PUNE, 17 OCT

NCP (SP) Chief Sharad Pawar on Thursday said the results of Haryana polls, where BJP retained power by defeating Congress, will not have any bearing on the next month's Maharashtra Assembly elections.

Responding to a query about the INDIA bloc's strategy after the Congress's defeat in the Haryana assembly elections, Pawar said the BJP was ruling that state and it managed to retain power.

"We are studying Haryana, but at the same time look at the results of Jammu and Kashmir (polls). I do not think that it (Haryana results) will have any bearing on the state's (Maharashtra's) elections.

Elections to the 288-member Maharashtra assembly will be held on 20 November, and the results will be declared on 23 November.

In the 5 October Haryana polls, BJP secured an unprecedented third term in the state, winning 48 seats in the 90-member assembly. The Congress won 37 seats. Nayab Singh Saini is set to take oath as its chief minister. Meanwhile, Congress on Thursday accused the Mahayuti government of "undermining" the legacy of one of India's greatest sons, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, and said those who reject Maharashtra's glorious history and composite culture will face their comeuppance next month.

- Meanwhile, Congress on Thursday accused the Mahayuti government of "undermining" the legacy of one of India's greatest sons, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh also alleged that the Mahayuti didn't spare the Chhatrapati from its "extortion and loot" as his 35-ft statue at Rajkot Fort in Sindhudurg was made so "shoddily" that it collapsed. *—PTI*

Kerala Health Minister Veena George at the funeral of former ADM Naveen Babu on Thursday *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

KERALA PANCHAYAT PRESIDENT BOOKED IN GOVT OFFICIAL'S DEATH

KANNUR, 17 OCT

A case was registered against Kannur District Panchayat President PP Divya, who is also a CPI(M) leader, on Thursday for the offence of abetment to suicide in connection with the recent death of former ADM Naveen Babu.

Babu allegedly died by suicide after Divya levelled corruption allegations against him during his farewell party following his transfer to his home district of Pathanamthitta as ADM for the last few months of his government service.

Babu who was supposed to reach his home district of Pathanamthitta on Tuesday morning to take charge as ADM there, was found hanging in his quarters. At his farewell he faced allegations of corruption from Divya, who allegedly attended the event without an official invitation.

She criticised him for delaying the approval of a petition pump in Chengalai for several months and said he granted approval only two days after being transferred. The death came to light when his family went to receive him, who was supposed to take charge as ADM Pathanamthitta, later in the day. *—PTI*

CHINESE VISA SCAM

CBI chargesheets Karti, others in graft case

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

The CBI has filed a chargesheet against Congress MP Karti Chidambaram and others in connection with alleged bribery in facilitating visas of Chinese nationals for a power company in 2011 when his father P Chidambaram was the Union home minister, officials said on Thursday.

In its chargesheet submitted before a special court here, the CBI has named Karti, the Lok Sabha MP from Sivaganga, his alleged close associate S Bhaskararaman, company Talawandi Sabo Power Ltd (TSPL), a subsidiary of Vedanta and Mumbai-based Bell Tools, through which bribes were allegedly routed, they said.

The agency has invoked charges of criminal conspiracy, cheating, and forgery under the Indian Penal Code and provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act, they said. CBI has filed the chargesheet after two years of probe into its FIR registered in 2022 where it had alleged that the Punjab-based TSPL was setting up a 1980 MW thermal power plant and the work was outsourced to a Chinese company Shandong Electric Power Construction Corp (SEPCO). The project was running behind its schedule and the company was allegedly facing prospects of penalty.

MP Karti Chidambaram with his father P Chidambaram *PHOTO: PTI*

The CBI FIR, which contained findings of the investigating officer who probed the preliminary enquiry, alleged that an executive of TSPL approached Karti Chidambaram through his "close associate/front man" Bhaskararaman.

A TSPL executive allegedly submitted a letter to the home ministry on July 30, 2011, seeking approval to reuse the project visas allotted to his company, which was approved within a month and permission was issued, the FIR had alleged. *—PTI*

'FORGERY POSSIBLE'

Section 6A of Citizenship Act open to abuse: Justice Pardiwala

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Dissenting from the majority judgment, Supreme Court's Justice JB Pardiwala on Thursday held that Section 6A of the Citizenship Act of 1955, which grants Indian citizenship to immigrants who entered Assam between 1 January, 1966, and 25 March, 1971, was arbitrary and constitutionally invalid.

In a dissenting opinion, Justice Pardiwala said the open-ended nature of Section 6A had become more prone to abuse due to the advent of forged documents.

"The open-ended nature of Section 6A has, with the passage time, become more prone to abuse due to the advent of forged documents to establish, inter-alia, wrong date of entry into Assam, inaccurate lineage, falsified government records created by corrupt officials, dishonest corroboration of the date of entry by other relatives so as to aid illegal immigrants who are otherwise not eligible under Section 6A by virtue of having entered into Assam after March 24,1971," he noted in a separate 127-page dissenting judgement.

Supreme Court *PHOTO: PTI*

Justice said it promotes immigration into Assam without any end date of application and immigrants come hoping with forged documents to set up the defence of belonging to pre-1966 or the 1966-71 stream upon identification as a foreigner and reference to the tribunal. He said while the object that was sought to be achieved with the enactment of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act remained a distant dream, its misuse had only continued to increase with the passage of time. He further said that Section 6A, in the absence of any temporal limit to its application, was being counter-productive to the object of enactment. The mandate of timely detection and deportation of illegal immigrants was the fundamental premise on which the Assam Accord was signed, the minority verdict highlighted. *—PTI*

KEYPOINTS

What is Section 6A?

- Deals with citizenship issues specific to Assam.
- Migrants from 1 January, 1966, and 25 March, 1971had to register, but were barred from citizenship for 10 years.
- Migrants arriving after 25 March, 1971, were to be deported.

Why was Section 6A challenged?

- Allegations that it discriminates against Assam by setting a different cut-off date (1971) rather than 1951.
- Concerns about demographic changes in Assam due to mass immigrations.

Government's stand

- The Solicitor General argued that declaring Section 6A unconstitutional wouldn't solve the issue.
- Emphasised the ongoing challenges of immigration, highlighting the 267 km shared border between Assam and Bangladesh.

NEET UG aspirant kills self in Rajasthan's Kota

KOTA, 17 OCT

A 20-year-old student from Uttar Pradesh, preparing for NEET-UG in Kota, allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself from a ceiling fan in his PG room on Wednesday night, police said. No suicide note was recovered from his room and the reason behind the extreme step is yet to be ascertained, they added. When the youth did not respond to knocking of the door and calls from family members on Wednesday night, the caretaker called police and the youth was found hanging from the ceiling fan, Circle Inspector at the Dadabari police station Naresh Meena said on Thursday morning. *—PTI*

UP farmer kills leopard with stick in 'self-defense'

BIJNOR, 17 OCT

A farmer allegedly killed a leopard after it attacked him in the Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh, officials said on Wednesday. The incident occurred in the Kalagarh area's Bhikkawala village when the farmer, identified as Tegveer Singh, 60, was working in his field. The leopard suddenly attacked him, Sunil Rajoura, a forest official, said. "As the leopard tried to drag Tegveer into the bushes, the farmer fought back, hitting the animal on the head with a stick. The blows from the stick eventually killed the leopard, but Tegveer was severely injured in the attack," Rajoura said. The Kalagarh area is located near the Amangarh tiger reserve in Bijnor, adjoining the Corbett National Park. Bijnor has witnessed human-animal conflict in the past too. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

13-yr-old MP boy dies while dancing to loud DJ music

KOLKATA, 17 OCT

A 13-year-old boy, Samar Billore, collapsed and died while dancing to loud music during a local festival in Bhopal. Despite having a heart condition, Samar joined the crowd after hearing the DJ outside his home. His mother, Jamuna Devi, cried for help, but the dancing continued around him. Doctors confirmed heart failure as the cause of death. His father, Kailash Billore, blamed the dangerously loud music. In many parts of Bhopal, playing loud music for different festivals, occasions are super common, and they often range from 90-100 decibels, which is far beyond permissible limits. *—Agencies*

We got certificate for 'Emergency': Kangana Ranaut

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Actor-BJP MP Kangana Ranaut on Thursday said the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has issued a certificate to "Emergency", weeks after she had to postpone the release of the political drama. "We have received the certificate for our movie Emergency," Ranaut wrote on her Instagram Stories. "We will be announcing the release date soon, thank you for your patience and support. @manikarnikafilms @zeestudiosofficial @nishantpitti," she added in her post. The film was scheduled to hit theatres across the country on 6 September but couldn't keep its date as it didn't get clearance certificate from the censor board, which is important for the public exhibition of films in India. It was caught up in controversy after Sikh organisations accused it of misrepresenting the community and getting facts wrong. Ranaut had accused the film body of stalling certification. *—PTI*

Will decide on immunity to husbands: SC on marital rape

Centre earlier said, making such acts punishable will affect marriages'

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Supreme Court on Thursday said it will decide the constitutional validity of penal provisions in the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) which grant immunity from prosecution to a husband for the offence of rape if he forces his wife, who is not a minor, to have sex with him.

A bench of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra sought views of the petitioners on Centre's contention that making such acts punishable would severely impact the conjugal relationship and cause serious disturbances in the institution of marriage.

Senior advocate Karuna Nundy, appearing for one of the petitioners, opened the arguments and referred to the provisions of the IPC and BNS on marital rape.

"It is a constitutional question. There are two judgments before us and we have to decide. The core issue is of the constitutional validity (of the penal provisions)," the CJI said.

The appeal has been filed by a woman, who was one of the petitioners before the High Court PHOTO: ANI

Nundy said the court must strike down a provision, which was unconstitutional.

"You are saying it (penal provision) violates Article 14 (right to equality), Article 19, Article 21 (life and personal liberty)...

The Parliament intended when it enacted the exception clause that when a man engages in a sexual act with wife above 18 years of age it cannot be constituted as rape," the top court remarked.

The appeal has been filed by a woman, who was one of the petitioners before the high court. While delivering the split judgment, Justice Rajiv Shakdher and Justice C Hari Shankar concurred on allowing the petitioners to appeal in Supreme Court as the matter involved substantial questions of law, requiring a decision by the top court. *—PTI*

SC AGREES TO LIST PLEA FOR J&K STATEHOOD

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Supreme Court (SC) on Thursday agreed to list for hearing an application seeking direction for restoration of the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir within two months.

Advocate Gopal Shankarnarayan mentioned the application for urgent listing of the matter, to which a bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud said that it will list the case.

The application has said that it becomes necessary that appropriate directions are passed directing the status of Statehood of Jammu and Kashmir to be restored at earliest in a time-bound manner..

"If directions to restore Statehood are not passed at the earliest it would lead to grave harm being caused to the federal structure." *—PTI*

Mumbai-bound Vistara flight with 147 people on board was immediately taken to security checks following a bomb threat PHOTO: ANI

2 Mumbai flights get bomb threats

MUMBAI, 17 OCT

The pattern of domestic airlines receiving bomb threats to their flights continued for the fourth day as two international flights, one each of Vistara and IndiGo, were targeted in the similar manner on Thursday.

Earlier on Wednesday, seven flights of IndiGo, SpiceJet and Akasa received similar bomb threats.

Prior to that, nearly a dozen flights operated by Indian carriers received similar threats on Monday and Tuesday.

On Thursday a Mumbai-bound Vistara flight with 147 persons on board was immediately taken to security checks on its arrival from Frankfurt following the Boeing 787 aircraft receiving a bomb threat, according to the airline.

At the same time, an IndiGo flight operating from Istanbul in Turkiye for Mumbai also received a bomb threat and was taken to an isolation bay here for the security agencies to carry out a comprehensive security check.

There were 134 passengers and 13 crew on board the aircraft, a source said.

The aircraft, which departed for Mumbai from Frankfurt on Wednesday at 8.20 pm (local time), made an emergency landing here at around 7.45 am on Thursday, the source said.

IndiGo in a statement said, "Flight 6E 18, operating from Istanbul to Mumbai, received a security-related alert. Upon landing, the aircraft was isolated, and all passengers were safely disembarked." *—PTI*

Bahraich violence: 5 suspects held, 2 suffer gunshot injuries

BAHRAICH, 17 OCT

Five suspects in the Bahraich violence case were arrested here Thursday after an encounter with the Uttar Pradesh Police in which two of them suffered gunshot injuries, a senior official said.

The accused were allegedly trying to flee to Nepal, which shares a border with Bahraich district in Uttar Pradesh, the officer said.

Director General of Police (DGP) Prashant Kumar said those arrested have been identified as Mohammad Faheen, Mohammad Sarfaraz and Abdul Hameed, who are named accused in the FIR -- and two others Mohammad Taleem alias Sabloo and Mohammad Afzal.

A doctor at a local health care centre said, "Two people were brought here around 2.35 pm. One of them was named Sarfaraz and the other Mohd Talib. One of them had injuries on his left leg and the other on his right leg."

Sarfaraz and Taleem, two of the accused in Bahraich killing PHOTO: ANI

Shortly after the encounter, the Samajwadi Party took to social media citing "rampant crimes" in the state and questioned if "riots and encounters" were being staged to divert people's attention from law and order issues.

Internet services were restored in Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich district on Thursday as local authorities continued to work towards restoring normalcy in and around Maharajganj where a 22-year-old man was killed in communal violence during a Durga idol immersion procession on Sunday, officials said.

The police have also issued a stern warning against the spread of rumours, urging the residents to prioritise communal harmony amid the ongoing efforts to restore peace in the area. *—PTI*

₹25 LAKH CONTRACT

Bishnoi member involved in 'plot to kill' Salman held

MUMBAI, 17 OCT

Navi Mumbai police have arrested a member of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang in connection with an alleged plot to kill Bollywood actor Salman Khan, an official said on Thursday.

The accused, Sukha alias Sukhbir Balbir Singh, was apprehended from Panipat in Haryana by a team of Panvel Town police (in Navi Mumbai) on Wednesday, he said.

He had allegedly given a contract for Rs 25 lakh to Bishnoi gang members to kill Khan, the official said.

Sukhbir Singh was in touch with his alleged handler Dogar, who is based in Pakistan, he said.

Singh along with the Bishnoi gang members had planned to use weapons from Pakistan, such as AK-47s, M16s and AK92s, to execute the alleged plot to kill Salman Khan, the official said.

Salman Khan PHOTO: PTI

The Navi Mumbai police will also interrogate Sukhbir Singh in connection with the case of murder of NCP leader and former Maharashtra minister Baba Siddique, the official said.

During the investigation, it also came to light that Lawrence Bishnoi and Sampat Nehra gangs had deployed around 60 to 70 members to monitor Khan's movements as part of efforts to conduct recce at his Bandra residence, Panvel farmhouse and film shooting locations.

The accused persons were trying to use minors as sharp-shooters. *—PTI*

ODISHA GOVT TO ERECT STATUES OF EMINENT PEOPLE

BHUBANESWAR, 17 OCT

Odisha government has decided to erect statues of Odia icons and other eminent personalities to make the youth aware of their contributions to the country's freedom struggle and society.

The decision for installation of these statues in several districts was taken by the Department of Odia Language, Literature and Culture at a meeting chaired by Minister Suryabanshi Suraj, according to an official release.

The statues of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and freedom fighter Veer Surendra Sai will be erected in Sambalpur, and that of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and poet Madhusudan Das in Cuttack, writers Gangadhar Meher in Bargarh, Fakir Mohan Senapati and freedom fighter Bagha Jatin in Balasore, Buddhist scholar Diganaga in Puri's Delang, Tamma Dora in Malkangiri and Bajirao iwere finalised for installation. *—PTI*

Tripura youth dies of 'police torture', 5 held

AGARTALA, 17 OCT

A 26-year-old man, who was arrested on the charge of theft at Sabroom in South Tripura district, died in his residence because of alleged torture during police custody, an officer said on Thursday.

Five police personnel posted at Manubazar police station have been detained following complaint of torture by the victim's family, Sabroom SDPO Nityananda Sarkar said.

Angry locals staged demonstration near the police station on Thursday demanding exemplary punishment of the police personnel who "tortured the arrested person leading to his death".

Badal Tripura, a resident of Kaladepa, was captured by the local people for allegedly stealing rubber sheets from a godown on October 13 and later handed him over to the police after beating him up.

A case was registered a case against the five police personnel and detained them following the complaint, he said.

Sarkar said the post-mortem examination of the tribal man's body will be conducted by a team of doctors in presence of an executive magistrate.

"Security has been beefed up in Manubazar police station following resentment among people over the death. Now, the situation is under control", he said. *—PTI*

RAIN UPDATE

People prepare a boat to go to a safer place on a waterlogged road amid rains, in Chennai. depression over Bay of Bengal crossed the coasts of north Tamil Nadu and south Andhra Pradesh between Puducherry and Nellore on Thursday morning, said Meteorological Department PHOTO: PTI

Rlys advance booking time now 60 days instead of 120

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

The Railway Board has reduced the advance reservation period of seats from existing 120 days to 60 days with effect from 1 November, 2024.

"It has been decided that w.e.f 01.11.2024, the existing time limit for advance reservation by trains will be reduced from 120 days to 60 days (excluding the date of journey)," a Railway Board's circular, dated 16 Oct, 2024, said.

All bookings done up to 31 October under ARP (Advance Reservation Period) of 120 days will remain intact, it added.

The circular did not cite any reason for the reduction in ARP.

According to the Board, cancellation of the booking made beyond the ARP of 60 days will, however, be permitted.

"There will be no change in the case of certain day time express trains like Taj Express, Gomti Express etc where lower time limits for advance reservation are, at present in force," the Board's circular said.

There will also be no change in the case of a limit of 365 days for foreign tourists, it said. *—PTI*

CHANDRACHUD RETIRES ON 11 NOV

CJI recommends Sanjiv Khanna as successor

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud has set in motion the process of appointment of his successor after he recommended the name of Justice Sanjiv Khanna, the senior-most judge after the outgoing CJI, to the Centre.

According to sources, CJI Chandrachud had on Wednesday written a letter of recommendation to the Union Law Ministry naming Justice Khanna as his successor.

Justice Khanna is set to become the 51st CJI on 11 November. Elevated as a judge of the Supreme Court on 18 January, 2019, Justice Khanna will superannuate on 13 May, 2025, making it a tenure of little over six months.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna
Judge, Supreme Court of India &
Chairman, SCLSC
Hon'ble Dr. Justice Dhananjaya Y.
Chief Justice of India &
Patron-in-Chief, NALS

Justice Sanjiv Khanna with CJI Chandrachud PHOTO: ANI

Justice Khanna was elevated as an additional judge of the Delhi High Court in 2005 and was made a permanent judge in 2006.

Born on 14 May, 1960, he studied law at the Campus Law Centre of Delhi University.

He was also part of the five-judge bench that declared the electoral bond scheme, meant for funding of political parties, as unconstitutional.

Justice Khanna will assume charges on 11 November, after the retirement of CJI Chandrachud on 10 November, after serving for two years at the helm of the Indian judiciary.

The retirement age of Supreme Court judges is 65 years.

According to sources, the Centre recently asked CJI Chandrachud to name his successor.

According to sources, Minister of State, Ministry of Law and Justice (independent charge) Arjun Ram Meghwal had written to CJI Chandrachud asking him to name his successor. *—PTI*

Forced to land, CEC spends night at U'khand village

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

PHOTO: PTI

Forced to make an emergency landing in a remote village near Munsiyari due to bad weather on Wednesday, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar spent the night in an uninhabited house in sub-zero temperature along with two pilots and two poll officials.

The helicopter took off on Thursday morning once the weather cleared and reached the Munsyari Tehsil headquarters safely, sources said.

Kumar was scheduled to visit the remote polling stations in Pithoragarh and 14 nearby villages to gain first-hand knowledge of the challenges faced by the election officials and the electorate in the high-altitude terrain, the sources said.

According to Pithoragarh District Magistrate Vinod Girish Goswami, the chopper, which was on its way to Milam Glacier, left at around 1 pm on Wednesday.

However, due to the cloudy weather and low visibility, it landed on a helipad in Ralam village, 42 km away, at around 1.30 pm, he said.

Soon after assuming charge in 2022, he trekked to one of the most distant polling stations at Dumak village in Chamoli district to experience the difficulties faced by the polling staff. *—PTI*

ASTRONAUTS WEAR PRADA

Italian luxury fashion brand Prada unveiled the design of a spacesuit that will be used for NASA's Artemis III lunar mission exploration programme, the first crewed Moon landing since December 1972. NASA's Artemis III mission to the moon has been planned for 2026. The spacesuit is made from a white material that reflects heat and protects astronauts from extremely high temperatures and lunar dust. Astronauts will be able to perform spacewalks for at least 8 hours

PHOTO: ANI

CM Saini seals place in political annals of H'yana

When BJP picked Nayab Singh Saini as the Haryana Chief Minister in March to buck anti-incumbency, many felt a change of guard would not be enough to win elections. But the low-profile OBC leader proved all the naysayers wrong by steering his party to a third successive term in the heartland state.

Not a nobody but not a somebody either when he replaced strongman Manohar Lal Khattar as chief minister, Saini was the BJP's man of the moment on Thursday when he was sworn in to head the state.

54-year-old proverbial dark horse, who has risen through the ranks of the Haryana BJP, deftly changed public perception of himself and the party in a state which many thoughts would go to Congress.

BJP won 48 seats in the 90-member Assembly. Three Independents, including Hisar MLA Savitri Jindal, have also extended support to the party.

Born in Ambala's Mirzapur Majra village on 25 January, 1970, Saini served as minister in the Khattar cabinet between 2014 and 2019.

During the past three decades, Saini held various positions in the Haryana BJP, including district president and general secretary of Haryana BJP Kisan Morcha.

He was the state BJP youth wing's Ambala district general secretary in 2002 and became the district president three years later.

He was elected to the Haryana Assembly from Naraingarh in 2014 and to Lok Sabha from Kurukshetra seat in 2019.

Saini was appointed as the Haryana BJP chief in October 2023 in an effort by the party to strengthen its hold over the OBC community and non-Jats. After he assumed charge as the chief minister, the BJP picked Mohan Lal Badoli as the state party unit chief in July.

Saini's elevation from the Haryana BJP president to chief minister in March came at a time when the party was facing anti-incumbency following Khattar's tenure of nine-and-a-half years and attacks from a buoyant opposition on farmers' issues, unemployment, Agnipath scheme, inflation, and law and order.

Nayab Singh Saini takes oath as the Chief Minister of Haryana for the second time during the swearing-in ceremony, in Panchkula, on Thursday ***PHOTO: PTI***

After Khattar resigned as chief minister in March, his Karnal assembly seat was vacated. Saini won the seat in a bypoll held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha elections in May, defeating Congress nominee Tarlochan Singh.

Barely days after Saini was brought in by the BJP, the Model Code of Conduct came into effect with the announcement of the Lok Sabha elections and later ahead of the assembly elections, effectively giving him only two months to turn the tide in the BJP's favour.

Saini quickly got to work, with his cabinet taking some important decisions.

Prominent among these were approving the Haryana Agniveer Policy, 2024 to provide employment and entrepreneurship opportunities to Agniveers after the completion of their service in the armed forces and giving the go-ahead to a proposal to buy 10 more crops at minimum support price, making Haryana the only state to purchase 24 crops at MSP.

BJP also promised to provide cooking gas cylinders at Rs 500 under the 'Har Ghar Grahani Yojana'.

The party's poll manifesto made more promises— monthly financial assistance of Rs 2,100 for women, two lakh government jobs for youths and guaranteed government jobs for Agniveers from Haryana.

The ruling party's poll campaign focused on alleged corruption, favouritism and scams during the Congress rule with Saini crisscrossing the state to tell people about the BJP government's achievements.

The BJP also told voters about the Congress' "failure" to fulfil poll promises in states like Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Telangana.

Notwithstanding the exit poll predictions, Saini had claimed BJP would return to power in Haryana for a third consecutive term.

"Aath tareekh (8 October) ko janata degi jawab, aur yeh (Congress) kahenge EVM hai kharab (The people will respond on October 8 and the Congress will blame EVMs for its defeat)," Saini had said on 6 October.

In the 5 October Assembly polls, Saini won Ladwa seat by a margin of 16,054 seats.

In a departure from tradition, BJP had declared that Saini would remain chief minister if the party returned to power in Haryana after the Assembly polls, even though former minister Anil Vij had also thrown his hat in the ring.

At a meeting of BJP MLAs on Wednesday, Saini was unanimously elected as the leader of BJP legislature party in Haryana and Vij was among those who backed his name.

—PTI

LETTERS

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SALAR سالار

'Water crisis threatens global food production'

The water crisis could jeopardise more than half of the world's food production and cause an average global GDP loss of 8 per cent by 2050, with lower-income countries facing up to a 15 per cent loss, according to a new report.

The report by the Global Commission on the Economics of Water, an international group of leaders and experts, said that weak economic systems, destructive land use, and the persistent mismanagement of water resources, combined with the worsening climate crisis, have placed the global water cycle under unprecedented stress.

"The water crisis threatens more than half of the world's food production by 2050 and could cause an 8 per cent loss of GDP in countries globally, with losses as high as 15 per cent in lower-income nations, alongside even larger economic consequences," the commission said.

Nearly 3 billion people and over half of the world's food production are located in areas experiencing drying or unstable trends in water availability. Several cities are sinking due to groundwater depletion, the report said.

"Today, half of the world's population faces water scarcity. As this vital resource becomes increasingly scarce, food security and human development are at risk -- and we are allowing this to happen," said Johan Rockström, Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) and one of the commission's four co-chairs.

"For the first time in human history, we are pushing the global water cycle out of balance. Precipitation, the source of all freshwater, can no longer be relied upon due to human-caused climate and land use changes, undermining the foundation of human well-being and the global economy," said Rockström.

The under-pricing of water globally has encouraged its excessive use ***PHOTO: PIXABAY***

- Nearly three billion people and over half of the world's food production are located in areas experiencing drying or unstable trends in water availability. Several cities are sinking due to groundwater depletion, the report said.

The report said that current approaches to water management have failed by overlooking the multiple values of water across economies and its role in preserving critical ecosystems.

The under-pricing of water globally has encouraged its excessive use and led to the misplacement of water-intensive industries, such as data centres and coal-fired power plants, in areas most vulnerable to water stress.

Proper pricing, subsidies, and other incentives are needed to ensure water is used more efficiently in every sector, equitably across populations, and sustainably in the long term, the report said.

"The global water crisis is a tragedy, but it also presents an opportunity to transform the economics of water. We must start by properly valuing water to recognise its scarcity and the many benefits it provides," said Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director-General of the World Trade Organisation and a co-chair of the commission.

The report also said that current approaches focus primarily on visible water sources, such as rivers, lakes, and aquifers, while neglecting the importance of "green water" – moisture in soils and plant life, which is vital for maintaining stable rainfall patterns and supporting the storage of carbon in the soil.

A stable supply of "green water" is critical for maintaining steady rainfall patterns, which are essential for economies, livelihoods, and mitigating climate change, the report said.

—PTI

Nearly 3 billion people and over half of the world's food production are located in areas experiencing drying or unstable trends in water availability ***PHOTO: PIXABAY***

3M annual deaths due to alcohol & drug use, majority among men

A new report from the World Health Organisation (WHO) highlights that 2.6 million deaths per year were attributable to alcohol consumption, accounting for 4.7 per cent of all deaths, and 0.6 million deaths to psychoactive drug use. Notably, 2 million of alcohol and 0.4 million of drug-attributable deaths were among men.

WHO's Global status report on alcohol and health and treatment of substance use disorders provides a comprehensive update based on 2019 data on the public health impact of alcohol and drug use and situation with alcohol consumption and treatment of substance use disorders worldwide. The report shows an estimated 400 million people lived with alcohol use disorders globally. Of this, 209 million people lived with alcohol dependence.

"Substance use severely harms individual health, increasing the risk of chronic diseases, mental health conditions, and tragically resulting in millions of preventable deaths every year. It places a heavy burden on families and communities, increasing exposure to accidents, injuries, and violence," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. "To build a healthier, more equitable society, we must urgently commit to bold actions that reduce the negative health and social consequences of alcohol consumption and make treatment for substance use disorders accessible and affordable."

The report highlights the urgent need to accelerate actions globally towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 3.5 by 2030 by reducing alcohol and drug consumption and improving access to quality treatment for substance use disorders.

Health consequences of alcohol consumption

The report highlights that despite some reduction in the alcohol-related death rates since 2010, the overall number of deaths due to alcohol consumption remains unacceptably high and amounts to 2.6 million in 2019, with the highest numbers in the European Region and the African region.

The death rates due to alcohol consumption per litre of alcohol consumed are highest in low-income countries and lowest in high-income countries.

Of all deaths attributable to alcohol in 2019, an estimated 1.6 million deaths were from non-communicable diseases, including 4,74,000 deaths from cardiovascular diseases and 4,01,000 from cancer.

Some 7,24,000 deaths were due to injuries, such as those from traffic crashes, self-harm and interpersonal violence. Another 2,84,000 deaths were linked to communicable diseases. For example, alcohol consumption has been shown to increase the risk of HIV transmission resulting from an increased risk of unprotected sex and by increasing the risk of TB infection and mortality by suppressing a wide range of immune responses.

The highest proportion (13 per cent) of alcohol-attributable deaths in 2019 were among young people aged 20–39 years.

Alcohol consumption trends

Total alcohol per capita consumption in the world population decreased slightly from 5.7 litres in 2010 to 5.5 litres in 2019.

The highest levels of per capita consumption in 2019 were observed in the WHO European Region (9.2 litres) and the Region of Americas (7.5L).

The level of alcohol consumption per capita among drinkers amounts on average to 27 grams of pure alcohol per day, roughly equivalent to two glasses of wine, two bottles of beer (33cl) or two servings of spirits (4cl). This level and frequency of drinking is associated with increased risks of numerous health conditions and associated mortality and disability.

Two million of alcohol and 0.4 million of drug-attributable deaths were among men ***PHOTO: PIXABAY***

- The report highlights that despite some reduction in the alcohol-related death rates since 2010, the overall number of deaths due to alcohol consumption remains unacceptably high and amounts to 2.6 million in 2019, with the highest numbers in the European Region and the African region.

In 2019, 38 per cent of current drinkers had engaged in heavy episodic drinking, defined as consuming at least 60g of pure alcohol on one or more occasions in the preceding month – roughly equivalent to 4 or 5 glasses of wine, bottles of beer or servings of spirits. Continuous heavy drinking was highly prevalent among men.

Globally, 23.5 per cent of all 15–19-year-olds were current drinkers. Rates of current drinking were highest among 15–19-year-olds in the European region (45.9 per cent) followed by the Americas (43.9 per cent).

Treatment gap for substance use disorders

Effective treatment options for substance use disorders exist, but treatment coverage remains incredibly low.

The proportion of people in contact with substance use treatment services ranged from less than 1 per cent to no more than 35 per cent in 2019, in countries providing this data.

Most of the 145 countries that reported data did not have a specific budget line or data on governmental expenditures for treatment of substance use disorders.

Although mutual help and peer support groups are useful resources for people with substance use disorders, almost half of responding countries reported that they do not offer such support groups for substance use disorders.

Stigma, discrimination and misconceptions about the efficacy of treatment contribute to these critical gaps in treatment provision, as well as the continued low prioritisation of substance use disorders by health and development agencies.

—WHO

PHOTO: X

Jimmy Carter, at age 100, casts his 2024 ballot by mail

PLAINS, 17 OCT

Jimmy Carter cast his ballot in the 2024 election Wednesday. The former president voted by mail, the Carter Center confirmed in a statement. It happened barely two weeks after Carter celebrated his 100th birthday on Oct. 1 at his home in Plains, Georgia, where he's been living in hospice care. His son Chip Carter said before the family gathering that his father had this election very much in mind. "He's plugged in," Chip Carter told The Associated Press. "I asked him two months ago if he was trying to live to be 100, and he said, No, I'm trying to live to vote for Kamala Harris.'" The Carter Center's brief statement said it had no more details to share. Georgia's registered voters have been turning out in record numbers since early voting began Tuesday. —*PTI*

UN expert for probe into attack on Afghan migrants

DUBAI, 17 OCT

A United Nations expert is calling for an investigation into reports that an attack by Iranian security forces on the border with Afghanistan killed and wounded migrants. Iran has denied any shooting took place Sunday near Saravan, a town in the country's restive southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchistan, which borders Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. However, anti-Afghan migrant rhetoric has escalated in Iran in recent months as Western sanctions grind down its economy, with the country's police chief claiming some 2 million migrants would be deported in the next six months. The Taliban said on Thursday they will provide updates once their investigation into the reported attack is complete. —*PTI*

IMF urges Pak to invest ₹1.2T in climate resilience

ISLAMABAD, 17 OCT

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has urged Pakistan to invest one per cent of its GDP annually — equivalent to over Rs 1.24 trillion based on current estimates — in climate resilience and adaptation reforms to prepare for recurring extreme weather events, particularly floods, a media report said on Thursday. In a special policy advisory, the IMF noted that ongoing reforms under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) — including fiscal, labour market, trade, and state-owned enterprise (SOE) reforms — could boost Pakistan's growth by 2 per cent over five years while significantly reducing inequality, Dawn newspaper reported. The Fund however, also highlighted that proactive investment in climate-adaptive infrastructure could reduce the negative growth impact of a natural disaster shock by one-third. —*PTI*

US BOMBERS TARGET HOUTHI BUNKERS

No info on damage or casualties were reported following B-2 stealth bombers launch

DUBAI, 17 OCT

US long-range B-2 stealth bombers launched airstrikes early Thursday morning targeting underground bunkers used by Yemen's Houthi rebels, officials said.

However, there are no previous reports of the B-2 Spirit being used in the strikes targeting the Houthis, who have been attacking ships for months in the Red Sea corridor over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

The Houthis' al-Masirah satellite news channel reported airstrikes around Yemen's capital, Sanaa, which the group has held since 2014. They also reported strikes around the Houthi stronghold of Saada. They offered no immediate information on damage or casualties.

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin said in a statement that the B-2 bombers targeted "five hardened underground weapons storage locations in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen."

There are no previous reports of the B-2 Spirit being used in the strikes targeting the Houthis **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

The strike also appeared to be an indirect warning to Iran, the Houthis' main benefactor, which has targeted Israel with ballistic missile attacks twice over the past year. The B-2 would be used in any American attack on hardened Iranian nuclear facilities like Natanz or Fordo given it is the only aircraft in service that can drop the GBU-57, known as the "Massive Ordnance Penetrator."

Austin and the US military's Central Command offered no immediate assessment on the damage done. However, Central Command said in a statement that initial assessments suggested no civilians had been killed. The Red Sea has become a battlefield for shippers since the Houthis began their campaign targeting ships traveling through the waterway, which once saw USD1 trillion of cargo pass through it yearly.

Houthis have targeted more than 80 merchant vessels with missiles and drones since the war in Gaza started in October 2023. They have seized one vessel and sunk two in the campaign that has also killed four sailors. Other missiles and drones have either been intercepted by a US-led coalition in the Red Sea or failed to reach their targets, which have included Western military vessels. —*PTI*

N Korea blows up rail linking 'hostile' S Korea

PYONGYANG, 17 OCT

North Korea has blown up sections of its road and railway links with South Korea and labelled its neighbour a "hostile state", state media has said.

The Korean People's Army destroyed the 60m long stretches of road and rail along the east and west sections of the inter-Korean border "as part of the phased complete separation" of North and South, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said on Thursday.

"This is an inevitable and legitimate measure taken in keeping with the requirement of the DPRK Constitution which clearly defines the ROK as a hostile state, and due to the serious security circumstances running to the unpredictable brink of war owing to the grave political and military provocations of the hostile forces," the KCNA said, using the acronyms of the official names of North and South Korea.

KCNA cited a Ministry of Defence spokesman as saying Pyongyang would take further measures to

Tensions between the Koreas, which remain technically at war after fighting in the 1950-53 Korean War ended without a peace treaty, have been escalating since last year's unravelling of a 2018 military accord aimed at reducing the risk of military clashes along the border.

—*PTI*

Zelenskyy heads to EU to seek backing for 'victory plan'

BRUSSELS, 17 OCT

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Thursday that support from his embattled nation's Western allies is key to his "victory plan" to end the country's devastating war with Russia as he laid out details of the plan to European Union leaders.

He told reporters the plan aims "to strengthen Ukraine" and pave the way for a diplomatic solution to end the conflict on Europe's eastern flank.

"I think that this plan doesn't depend on Russian will, only on the will of our partners," he said before addressing leaders at an EU summit.

Zelenskyy was later shuttling across Brussels to meet with NATO defence ministers. The EU is a key supporter of Ukraine, a candidate member of the 27-nation bloc, as it fights Russia's invasion that began more than 2 1/2 years ago.

Zelenskyy outlined the five-point plan to Ukraine's parliament on Wednesday without disclosing confidential elements that have been presented in private to key allies, including the United States.

The Institute for the Study of War in Washington said that Russian President Vladimir Putin is seeking to draw out the war and he believes "that Russian forces can outlast Western support for Ukraine and collapse Ukrainian resistance by winning a war of attrition".

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte was muted in his response to the plan on Wednesday. —*PTI*

Australia gives tanks to Ukraine

Melbourne, 17 Oct

Australia will give 49 of its aging M1A1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine months after Kyiv requested the redundant fleet, Defense Minister Richard Marles said Thursday. The Australian government was giving Ukraine most of its American-made M1A1 tanks, which are valued at USD 163 million, Marles said. Marles had said that giving tanks as they were phased out was not on his government's agenda.

CHINA'S 'SWEETHEART'

Chinese Coast Guard encircled Taiwan for the first time as part of the "Joint Sword-2024B" military drills by releasing a poster. The image has a red heart-shaped trail of arrows encircling it. The accompanying text, written in traditional Chinese characters read: "Hello, my sweetheart," and "The patrol is in the shape of loving you." **PHOTO: CHINESECOASTGUARD**

Bangladesh issues arrest warrant against Hasina

DHAKA, 17 OCT

Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal on Thursday issued arrest warrants against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who was ousted after student-led protests in August, and 45 others for alleged crimes against humanity.

The warrants against Hasina, 77, and others, including her party Awami League's top leaders, were issued on the first day of the judicial proceedings begun by the re-constituted tribunal, Dhaka Tribune newspaper said.

The Tribunal, led by its chairman Justice Md Golam Mortuza Majumdar, passed the orders after the prosecution filed two petitions seeking arrest warrants, Chief Prosecutor Muhammad Tajul Islam was quoted as saying by the Daily Star. The ICT also directed the authorities concerned to produce Hasina and 45 others before it by 18 November. —*PTI*

Sheikh Hasina **PHOTO: PTI**

- The warrants against were issued on the first day of the judicial proceedings begun by the re-constituted tribunal

250 students held for protest against on-campus rape in Pak

LAHORE, 17 OCT

At least 250 students were arrested on Thursday in Rawalpindi for violence during protests against an alleged on-campus rape in a Lahore college as the agitation spread to other cities of Punjab province in Pakistan.

The protests erupted on Monday in at least four boys' and girls' campuses of the privately-owned Punjab Group of Colleges following social media reports that a female student at the Gulberg girls' campus in Lahore had allegedly been raped by a security guard in the institution's basement.

Police claimed they have the suspect in custody, but he has denied the allegation.

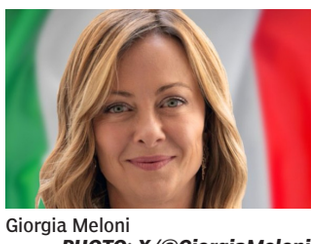
Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has blamed jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party for spreading fake news on social media and said that no such incident had taken place.

On Wednesday, a large number of students held demonstrations in Jehlum, Faisalabad, and Gujrat, demanding justice for the alleged rape victim.

The student protesters ransacked a college building in Rawalpindi, forcing police to fire tear gas to disperse them **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

The student protesters ransacked a college building in Rawalpindi, forcing police to fire tear gas to disperse them. The police said legal actions were being taken against those involved in disrupting peace. The guilty would be punished, they added.

—*PTI*



Giorgia Meloni **PHOTO: X/@GiorgiaMeloni**

ITALY EXPANDS BAN ON SURROGACY TO OVERSEAS COUPLES

ROME, 17 OCT

Italy on Wednesday criminalised citizens who go abroad to have children through surrogacy, a measure slammed by opponents as "medieval" and discriminatory to same-sex couples.

The measure extending a surrogacy ban in place since 2004 was promoted by Premier Giorgia Meloni's far-right Brothers of Italy party and its conservative coalition partner, the League, asserting that it protects women's dignity.

The Senate after a seven-hour debate passed the bill 84-58, the final step in the process after the Lower House's approval last year. Italians seeking surrogacy in countries such as the United States or Canada, where the practice is legal, can face up to two years in jail and up to USD 1.1 million in fines. But same-sex parent advocates say it hits gay families particularly hard in a country struggling with record-low birthrates and where only heterosexuals are allowed to adopt. LGBTQ+ couples have been fighting to obtain parental rights for the partner who is not the biological parent. —*PTI*

Kamala calls Trump 'unstable', on TV

WASHINGTON, 17 OCT

The United States has a broken immigration system that needs to be repaired, Vice President Kamala Harris said on Wednesday in a rare interview with the Republican-leaning news channel Fox News during which she sparred with its popular host.

She called Republican candidate Donald Trump "unstable" and questioning the 78-year-old former president's fitness for office. On illegal immigration, she said, "We worked on supporting what was a bipartisan effort, including some of the most conservative members of the United States Congress, to actually strengthen the border. That border bill would have put 1,500 more border agents at the border, which is why I believe the Border Patrol agents supported the bill. It would have allowed us to stem the flow of fentanyl coming into the United States, which is a scourge affecting people of every background, every geographic location in our country, killing people," she said. —*PTI*

Kamala Harris **PHOTO: X/@VP**

Trump calls himself 'father of IVF' ahead of Prez polls

WASHINGTON DC, 17 OCT

Republican candidate Donald Trump called himself the "father of IVF" at a town hall for women voters on Wednesday as he tries to convince the crucial voting bloc they can trust him on reproductive issues.

Trump, who is trailing Democratic candidate Kamala Harris in popularity among women voters suggested he was eager to discuss the issue at an all-women event hosted by Fox News in Georgia. It is a key state likely to decide the election. Senate Republicans blocked Democratic-led legislation designed to protect IVF access twice in recent months, with some Republicans arguing the legislation is unnecessary as IVF access is not in danger. —*Agencies*

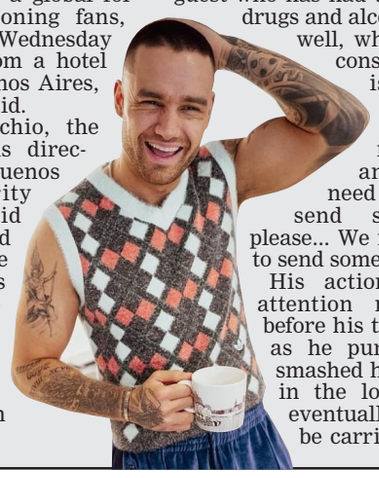
'HOW FAST THE NIGHT CHANGES'

One Direction's Liam Payne, 31, falls to death from hotel balcony

BUENOS AIRES, 17 OCT

Former One Direction singer Liam Payne, 31, whose chart-topping British boy band generated a global following of swooning fans, was found dead Wednesday after falling from a hotel balcony in Buenos Aires, local officials said.

Pablo Policicchio, the communications director for the Buenos Aires Security Ministry, said that Payne "had jumped from the balcony of his room". Police rushed to the hotel in response to an emergency call just after 5 pm local time.



A caller identifying as the hotels' chief receptionist called emergency service 911 moments before Payne died and said, "Well, we've got a guest who has had too many drugs and alcohol and, well, when he is conscious he is trashing the entire room and we need you to send someone, please... We need you to send someone."

His actions drew attention moments before his tragic fall as he purportedly smashed his laptop in the lobby and eventually had to be carried to his room. According to Argentinian media a shattered TV, a powdery substance believed to be a drug were found on the scene. Payne had been vocal about struggling with alcoholism, posting a video in July 2023 to his YouTube channel where he said he had been sober for six months after receiving treatment. Payne was previously engaged to Maya Henry, from August 2020 to early 2022. Henry released a novel earlier this year that she said was based on their relationship. According to reports, she had obtained a restraining order against him

In addition to his seven-year old son with singer Cheryl Cole, he is survived by his parents, Geoff and Karen Payne, and his two older sisters. —*Agencies*

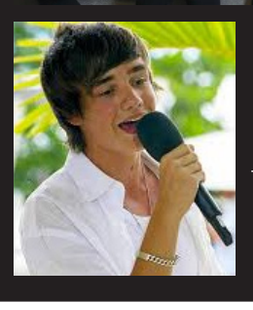
LIAM PAYNE'S MUSICAL JOURNEY

- At 14, he joined One Direction, formed by Simon Cowell on talent show 'The X Factor' in 2010, alongside Harry Styles, Zayn Malik, Niall Horan and Louis Tomlinson.
- One Direction had hits like 'What Makes You Beautiful' and 'Best Song Ever' before going on hiatus in 2016.
- The band never came back together.
- They topped Billboard's 2014 year-end Top Artists chart.
- In 2017, he launched his solo career with the single 'Strip That Down' featuring Quavo, which topped Billboard for two weeks. It hit No. 10 on the Billboard Hot 100.

Debut solo album, 'LP1', topped Billboard's Heat seekers Albums chart in 2019.

3B in radio audience.

897M on-demand US song streams.



"Liam will forever live in our hearts and we'll remember him for his kind, funny and brave soul
—Liam's family

I am in shock right now. Liam was always so kind to me. He was one of the first major artists I got to work with. I cannot believe he is gone
-Charlie Puth, American singer and Liam's friend

PHOTO: PTI

Rupee falls 5 paise to close at 84.07 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 17 OCT

Rupee traded in a narrow range and settled for the day lower by 5 paise to 84.07 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, pressured by foreign fund outflows, a negative trend in domestic equities and broad strength of the American currency.

Forex traders said rupee witnessed range-bound trade as weak domestic markets and a strong US dollar weighed on the domestic currency, while a decline in crude oil prices and contained geopolitical tensions cushioned the downside. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 84.01 and traded in a narrow range of 83.99 and 84.07 and finally settled for the day at 84.07 (provisional), lower by 5 paise over its previous close of 84.02. *—PTI*

Airlines to operate 25,007 weekly flights in winter

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Indian airlines will operate 25,007 flights every week to and from 124 airports in the winter schedule starting October 27, according to aviation regulator DGCA.

The number of flights is three per cent higher than 24,275 departures per week from 125 airports in the current summer schedule. In comparison to the winter schedule 2023, the number of flights has increased by 5.37 per cent. The winter schedule is from 27 October, 2024 till 29 March, 2025.

"Out of these 124 airports, Pondicherry airport is proposed by the scheduled airlines whereas operations from Pakyong and Tezpur airport were suspended in the winter schedule 2024," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said in a release on Thursday. *—PTI*

L&T bags order ₹2K cr order from Rashtriya Fertilisers

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Infrastructure major Larsen & Toubro (L&T) on Thursday said it has bagged a significant order from state-owned Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilisers Ltd for its hydrocarbon business. The company classifies a 'significant order' as orders valued between Rs 1,000 crore and Rs 2,500 crore. The project involves License, Engineering, Procurement and Construction (L-EPC) of a fertiliser plant along with associated utilities and offsite facilities for Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilisers Ltd (RCF) at their Thal unit in Raigad district, approximately 100 km from Mumbai. *—PTI*

JSW inks 1st hybrid power pact with GUVNL

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

JSW Energy Ltd on Thursday said its arm JSW Renew Energy Seventeen Ltd has signed Power Purchase Agreement with Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd (GUVNL) for STU-connected 192 MW wind-solar hybrid capacity. This agreement marks the company's first Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for a wind-solar hybrid capacity, the company said in a statement to BSE. The PPA is signed for supply of power for a period of 25 years with a tariff of Rs 3.27/kWh, according to the statement. The project is expected to be commissioned within 24 months and will be connected to the State Transmission Utilities in Gujarat.The company currently has a project pipeline capacity of 8.3 GW with PPA signed for 3.2 GW.JSW Energy has total locked-in generation capacity of 18.2 GW comprising 7.7 GW operational, 2.1 GW under-construction across wind, thermal and hydro and RE pipeline of 8.3 GW. *—PTI*

Investors' wealth erodes by ₹6 lakh cr as market slumps

Sensex, Nifty slide to 2-month lows on selling in banking

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Investors' wealth slumped Rs 6 lakh crore on Thursday as markets fell sharply amid unabated foreign fund outflows.

Falling for the third straight day, benchmark Sensex lost nearly 495 points on Thursday to close at a nearly two-month low due to selling in select banking, auto and realty shares and foreign fund outflows.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms tanked Rs 6,03,862.06 crore to Rs 4,57,25,183.01 crore (USD 5.44 trillion).

As many as 21 Sensex stocks closed in red and nine with gains.

The broader 50-issue Nifty slumped 221.45 points or 0.89 per cent to settle at 24,749.85 as 41 of its constituents declined.

"Rising domestic inflation data released this week and continued FII selling weighed on the market sentiments. This along with disappointing Q2 earnings from major companies added to the pressure," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Wealth Management at Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

Mahindra & Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finserv, Titan, Tata Steel, Maruti and Axis Bank were among the other big laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors offloaded equities worth Rs 3,435.94 crore on Wednesday *PHOTO: PTI*

However, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Power Grid, Larsen & Toubro and State Bank of India were among the biggest gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 3,435.94 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

The BSE midcap gauge declined 1.65 per cent and smallcap index fell 1.42 per cent.

Among the indices, realty tumbled 3.76 per cent, auto (3.48 per cent), consumer discretionary (2.45 per cent), consumer durables (2.28 per cent), commodities (1.77 per cent), oil & gas (1.54 per cent) and power (1.48 per cent).

BSE IT and teck emerged as the only gainers.

A total of 2,690 stocks declined while 1,272 advanced and 102 remained unchanged on the BSE. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 3,435.94 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.27 per cent to USD 74.42 a barrel. *—PTI*

Nestle India Q2 profit down to Rs 899.49 cr

New Delhi, 17 Oct

FMCG major Nestle India Ltd on Thursday reported a marginal decline of 0.94 per cent in its net profit at Rs 899.49 crore for the second quarter that ended September 2024 as some of its key brands faced softer consumer demand and high commodity prices. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 908.08 crore in the July-September period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing from Nestle India. However, Nestle India's revenue from the sale of products was up 1.3 per cent to Rs 5,074.76 crore in the September quarter. It was at Rs 5,009.52 crore in the corresponding period of last fiscal.

ON DAY 3

Hyundai India's record ₹27,870 cr IPO fully subscribed

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

The initial public offer of Hyundai Motor India Ltd, the Indian arm of South Korean automaker Hyundai, got fully subscribed on the third day of the bidding on Thursday.

The Rs 27,870 crore initial share sale got bids for 14,07,68,187 shares against 9,97,69,810 shares on offer, translating into 1.41 times subscription, as per NSE data till 13:21 hours.

The quota for Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) got 3.88 times subscription while the portion meant for Retail Individual Investors (RIIs) received 44 per cent subscription. The non-institutional investors part fetched 39 per cent subscription.

Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) on Monday raised Rs 8,315 crore from anchor investors. This is the largest IPO in the country, surpassing LIC's initial share sale of Rs 21,000 crore. The IPO has a price band of Rs 1,865-1,960 per share.

The IPO is entirely an offer for sale (OFS) of 14,21,94,700 equity shares by promoter Hyundai Motor Company (HMC), with no fresh issue component.

This is the first initial share sale by an automaker in over two decades, following Japanese carmaker Maruti Suzuki's listing in 2003.

PHOTO: PTI

- The IPO is entirely an offer for sale of 14,21,94,700 shares.

Since the public issue is completely an OFS, Hyundai Motor India Ltd, the second largest carmaker in India after Maruti Suzuki, will not receive any proceeds from the IPO.

HMIL stated that it expects that the listing of the equity shares will enhance its visibility and brand image, and provide liquidity and a public market for the shares.

At the upper end of the price band, the IPO size has been pegged at Rs 27,870 crore (USD 3.3 billion), and the company's market valuation at around Rs 1.6 lakh crore (about USD 19 billion) post-issue.

HMIL commenced operations in India in 1996 and currently, sells 13 models across segments. *—PTI*

Tomato prices to cool down soon, says govt

The price surge comes as supplies from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have been disrupted due to retreating monsoon rains *PHOTO: PTI*

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Relief may be in sight for Delhi-NCR residents reeling under soaring tomato prices, which have crossed Rs 100 per kg mark, with increased supplies expected from Maharashtra in the coming days, Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare said on Thursday.

The government will continue selling tomatoes at a subsidised rate of Rs 65 per kg in Delhi-NCR and Mumbai through the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India (NCCF), Khare told reporters.

The price surge comes as supplies from key southern states Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have been disrupted due to retreating monsoon rains causing crop damage and pest infestation.

This supply crunch, coupled with festive season demand, has pushed prices northward. "While weekly arrivals have been impacted, we expect supplies from Maharashtra to improve shortly, which should help stabilise prices in the national capital," Khare said, adding that the government is maintaining strict vigilance on price movements. Since 7 October, NCCF has sold around 10,000 kg of tomatoes through mobile vans and outlets in Delhi and Mumbai at a subsidised rate. *—PTI*

Nitin Gadkari *PHOTO: PTI*

INDIA'S LOGISTICS COST WILL COME DOWN: GADKARI

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday said India's logistics cost will come down to single-digit within the next two years.

Addressing an event organised by NITI Aayog, Gadkari said the ministry is constructing several highways and expressways, which will help reduce India's logistics cost.

"Within two years, we are going to reduce our logistics cost to 9 per cent," he added.

According to quick estimates of the economic think tank National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), logistics costs in India ranged between 7.8 per cent to 8.9 per cent of GDP for the fiscal 2021-22. Gadkari said there is huge potential for India to export alternative fuels and biofuels.

He also pointed out that low-quality coal is useful for making methanol.

The minister added that India is making significant strides in the biofuel sector, especially in methanol.

Further, Gadkari said he aimed to make the Indian automobile industry number one in the world. Last year, India had overtaken Japan to become the third-largest automobile market in the world, only behind the US and China, he said. *—PTI*

FASTEST GROWING ECONOMY

Moody says India's economy to drive carbon-intensive demand

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Moody's Ratings on Thursday said India has made rapid progress building its renewables capacity, but its fast-growing economy and expanding population will drive up carbon-intensive product demand.

Moody's expects India to remain one of the fastest growing economies in the world with real GDP growing 7.2 per cent in 2024 and 6.6 per cent in 2025. The country is likely to sustain similarly high rates of growth over the next decade, it said. India's share of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions increased to 7.5 per cent in 2022, from 6.7 per cent in 2019.

The government's ability to attract private investment and address negative spillovers from decarbonization, including job losses in legacy industries, will determine whether India's credit exposure to carbon transition and social risks rises further, the Moody's report titled Carbon Transition - India said.

Moody's expects India to remain one of the fastest growing economies in the world *PHOTO: PTI*

India has committed to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070, and some progress has been made toward its 2030 interim decarbonization milestones. But, the country's fast-expanding economy will continue to drive up GHG emissions.

India was the world's third-largest GHG emitter as of 2022, but its per capita emissions are still lower than other major economies, highlighting scope for further gains, Moody's said.

Electricity and heating are the highest-emitting sector, while agriculture accounts for 22 per cent of emissions —double the world average— partly reflecting methane emissions, with livestock and dairy making significant contributions. *—PTI*

High prices of crude, gold led to high inflation: SBI

As per the data, this surge in imports is particularly in gold *PHOTO: PTI*

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

India's imported inflation reached a 13-month high in September 2024, growing by 2 per cent, according to a report by the State Bank of India (SBI).

The report highlighted that imported inflation is increasingly contributing to the country's overall inflation, as rising prices of gold, oils and fats, and chemical products drive the increase.

Imported inflation is the increase in the price of goods and services in a country due to higher costs of imported products.

The report noted a concerning trend and said, "The share of imported inflation in the overall inflation has also risen. The imported inflation has registered a growth of 2 per cent in September, which is the highest reading in the last 13 months. Gold prices, oils and fats, and chemical products are major contributors to imported inflation."

As per the latest trade data figures this surge in imports is particularly in gold. The country imported USD 10.06 billion worth of gold in September 2024, a significant jump from USD 4.94 billion in the same month last year.

This marks the highest gold import value from January to September this year. In August 2024 alone, gold imports increased by 103.7 per cent in value terms, while in the period of April-August 2024-25, imports grew by 25.2 per cent. However, in volume terms, gold imports saw a mixed trend, rising by 62.24 per cent in August but declining by 2.18 pet cent for the April-August period. *—ANI*

Gold hits fresh record high of ₹79,350 per 10g

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Gold prices advanced Rs 450 to hit another record of Rs 79,350 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday on the back of continued buying by jewellers and stockists, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 78,900 per 10 grams in the previous session on Wednesday.

Rallying for the second straight day, gold of 99.5 per cent climbed Rs 450 to hit another fresh high of Rs 78,950 per 10 grams. It had finished at Rs 78,500 per 10 grams.

However, silver remained flat at Rs 93,500 per kg. Traders said increased buying by local jewellers to meet festive demand and a rally in the precious metal rates in the global markets mainly lifted gold prices to record high levels. In futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for December delivery reached a lifetime high of Rs 77,019 per 10 grams.

However, silver contracts for December delivery depreciated Rs 181 or 0.2 per cent to Rs 92,002 per kg on the bourse.

In the Asian market hours, Comex gold futures rose 0.43 per cent to USD 2,703 per ounce.

Meanwhile, silver futures slipped 0.15 per cent to USD 31.93 per ounce in the international markets. *—PTI*

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Direct tax collection jump 182% in 10 yrs

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Direct tax collections have surged 182 per cent to over Rs 19.60 lakh crore in 2023-24 in the 10-year period of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government.

The latest 'Time Series Data' released by the income tax department showed that the corporate tax collections more than doubled to over Rs 9.11 lakh crore in 10 years to 2023-24 fiscal. Personal income tax mop up grew close to four-fold to Rs 10.45 lakh crore during the period.

In the first year of the Modi government in 2014-15, direct tax collection was about Rs 6.96 lakh crore. This included about Rs 4.29 lakh crore of corporate tax and Rs 2.66 lakh crore of personal income tax.

Personal income tax mop up grew close to Rs 10.45 lakh crore *PHOTO: PTI*

The number of income tax returns filed (including revised returns) increased from over 4.04 crore in 2014-15 fiscal to over 8.61 crore in 2023-24.

Direct tax-to-GDP ratio increased from 5.55 per cent in 2014-15 to 6.64 per cent in 2023-24. Tax buoyancy, which measures revenue mobilisation efficiency with respect to GDP growth, increased from 0.86 to 2.12 in the 10-year period.

The number of taxpayers increased from 5.70 crore in Assessment Year (AY) 2014-15 to 10.41 crore in 2023-24 AY. *—PTI*

- In 2014-15, direct tax collection was about Rs 6.96 lakh crore. This included about Rs 4.29 lakh crore of corporate tax and Rs 2.66 lakh crore of income tax. The number of income tax returns filed increased from 4.04 crore in 2014-15 fiscal to 8.61 crore in 2023-24.

PHOTO: PTI

India thrash Pakistan 5-2 in SAFF Championship

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

India made an excellent start to their SAFF Women's Championship 2024 campaign as they outclassed Pakistan 5-2 in a Group A match at the Dasharath Stadium in Kathmandu on Thursday. The five-time champions led 4-1 at halftime. While India grabbed three points with consummate ease in the opening game of the three-team group that also has Bangladesh, the match marked skipper Devi's 100th appearance for the Blue Tigresses and the 50th international goal of prolific striker Bala Devi, who became the first Indian woman footballer to do so. While Grace Dangmei (2), Manisha, Devi, and Jyoti Chauhan scored for India, Suha Hirani and Kayla Siddique found the net for Pakistan. The two traditional rivals have so far met four times in the international arena and India emerged triumphant on all occasions.—*PTI*

Fassi and Arwefjäll to compete in Hero Indian Open

GURUGRAM, 17 OCT

Mexico's Maria Fassi and Sweden's Kajsa Arwefjäll have become the latest additions to the star-studded list of the Hero Women's Indian Open (HWIO), which will take place at the DLF Golf and Country Club from 24-27 October. Arwefjäll, a rising talent on the Ladies European Tour, is thrilled about her first trip to India. Hailing from a sporting family in a country known for producing legends like Annika Sörenstam, the 24-year-old Swede made waves on the LET Access Tour in 2024, securing two wins and six additional top-10 finishes to top the Order of Merit, earning her a spot in HWIO. She will be among a strong contingent of 10 Swedish players on the field. Notably, Caroline Hedwall, the only Swede to win the HWIO in 2011, is also competing and has finished as runner-up three times.—*PTI*

Bayern and Man City win again in Women's CL

WASHINGTON, 17 OCT

Bayern Munich and Manchester City extended their winning starts in the Women's Champions League group stage, while Arsenal and Barcelona rebounded from early-season setbacks with big victories. One day after Arsenal's coach Jonas Eidevall resigned, the team took just one minute to score in a 4-1 win over Norwegian team Vålerenga. United States defender Emily Fox's goal after exactly 60 seconds set Arsenal on its way for interim manager Renée Slegers. Arsenal lost 5-2 in Munich one week ago and Bayern impressed again, winning a rain-soaked game 2-0 at Juventus.—*PTI*

Doping ban reduced for German hockey player

BONN, 17 OCT

Yannic Seidenberg, who won the silver medal with the German men's hockey team at the 2018 Olympics, has had his doping ban cut by 18 months. The 40-year-old forward had filed an appeal against a four-year ban imposed last year over the alleged use of testosterone and another banned substance, DHEA. Germany's anti-doping agency said Wednesday it and the World Anti-Doping Agency reached a "case resolution agreement" with Seidenberg that suspends 12 months of the ban and cuts another six months off for delays deemed not to be the player's fault.The ban had been previously backdated to start from 2022 and will now expire in March 2025.
—*PTI*

Devon Conway's 91 leads NZ to 180/3

Pacers bowl out India for record-low 46

BENGALURU, 17 OCT

Devon Conway plays a shot on second day of the first Test cricket match between India and New Zealand, at M Chinnaswamy Stadium, in Bengaluru on Thursday PHOTO: PTI

The mighty India succumbed to their lowest total at home on a rare off day in familiar conditions before Devon Conway extended New Zealand's advantage with a steely 91, steering them to 180 for three at stumps on day two of the first Test here on Thursday.

Daryl Mitchell (14) and Rachin Ravindra (22) were manning the crease at stumps as Kiwis built a lead of 134 runs. Mark Henry (5/15) and William O'Rourke (4/22) engineered a batting collapse of Adelaidean proportions, dismantling India for 46, their lowest innings total at home in Tests. India's day was made even gloomier later as Rishabh Pant limped out of the field after a sharply-turned ball from Ravindra Jadeja slammed onto his left knee.

The visiting batters needed to build on the phenomenal effort of the bowlers, and Conway did the job to perfection. He first added 67 runs for the opening wicket with skipper Tom Latham (15), who fell to Kuldeep Yadav, and then 75 with Will Young for the second as New Zealand marched ahead confidently.

Conway and Young (33), who was dropped on 32 by Rohit Sharma at first slip off Jadeja, staved off India's charges.

Conway brought up his fifty in just 54 balls with a six off Ravichandran Ashwin over the bowler's head.

Young was more fortuitous but gave brave company to Conway before perishing to Jadeja in his attempt to sweep the left-arm spinner.

Conway does not possess the proverbial left-hander's grace but he is more the industrious kind and that was precisely New Zealand's need on a day like this.

Brief Scores:
India 1st innings: 46 all out in 31.2 overs (Rishabh Pant 20; Matt Henry 5/15)

New Zealand 1st innings: 180/3 in 50 overs (Devon Conway 91, Will Young 33; Ravindra Jadeja 1/28, R Ashwin 1/46, Kuldeep Yadav 1/57). —*PTI*

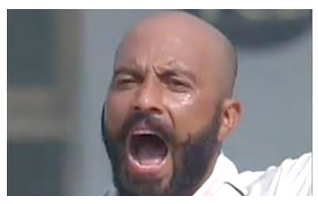
Pakistan's Sajid Khan takes 7 as England all out 291

MULTAN, 17 OCT

With a twinkle in his eye and a twirl of his mustache, Sajid Khan helped turn the Multan rematch Pakistan's way. A first-innings seven-for was followed up by crucial lower-order runs to help set England a daunting target of 297 to win the second Test. Sajid then struck with his third ball to remove Ben Duckett, England's centurion on day two and a key man in their hopes of a successful chase.

Sajid may be an unassuming offspinner on paper and something of an afterthought in selection - he described himself as "always the first to be kicked out" after taking four England wickets during the second evening to put his side on top. Colorful celebrations he has brought some much-needed character to Pakistan's attempts to break a winless run at home that stretches back to 2021.

England 291 (Duckett 114, Sajid 7-111) and 36 for 2 need a further 261 to beat Pakistan 366 and 221 (Salman 63, Bashir 4-66) —*PTI*



Sajid Khan PHOTO: PCB

SHOOTING WORLD CUP FINAL

Vivaan Kapoor PHOTO: NRAI

Vivaan Kapoor, Anant light up India's campaign

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Vivaan Kapoor claimed silver in the men's trap event after compatriot Anant Jeet Singh Naruka's bronze in the men's skeet competition, taking India's tally to four medals at the ISSF World Cup Final here on Thursday.

Vivaan shot 44 in the final to finish behind gold medal winner Ying Qi of China. Turkey's Tolga N Tuncer won the bronze medal with a score of 35.

Vivaan had come up with a score of 120 out of 125 in the qualification round to enter the six-man finals.

Earlier, Naruka, the 26-year-old from Rajasthan, shot 43 in the six-man final, earning third place, while Italy's Tammaro Cassandro and Gabriele Rossetti took home the gold and silver with scores of 57 and 56, respectively.

Naruka made it to the finals by scoring 121 out of 125 in the qualification round.

Sonam Maskar had won a silver in the women's 10m air rifle on Tuesday and Akhil Sheoran clinched a bronze in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions on Wednesday.

Naruka and Maheshwari Chauhan had settled for a fourth-place finish in the skeet mixed team event at the Paris Olympics after losing the bronze medal match to China.
—*PTI*

India drawn with Pak and Indonesia in AFC

KUALA LUMPUR, 17 OCT

The Indian women's national futsal team was drawn alongside Indonesia, Hong Kong, Pakistan, and the Kyrgyz Republic in Group B of the AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup 2025 Qualifiers, following the draw conducted at the AFC House here on Thursday.

It will mark the first time India will participate in the AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup Qualifiers. Group B will be hosted by Indonesia from January 11-19, 2025.

A total of 19 teams will battle it out of nine places in the AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup 2025, which will be hosted by China in May 2025. Teams were divided into three groups of five and one group of four.

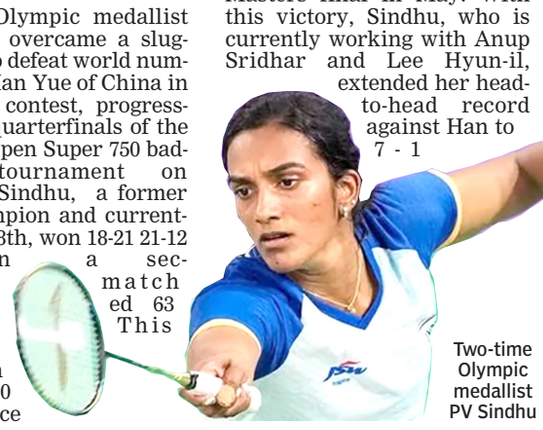
The top two of each group and the best third-placed side among all groups – will progress to the finals and join hosts China and finalists of the AFC Women's Futsal Championship, Iran and Japan, to continue their quest for glory. Both prior editions in 2015 and 2018 were won by Iran. —*PTI*

DENMARK OPEN

Sindhu edges past Han to enter QFs

ODENSE, 17 OCT

Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu overcame a sluggish start to defeat world number seven Han Yue of China in a thrilling contest, progressing to the quarterfinals of the Denmark Open Super 750 badminton tournament on Thursday. Sindhu, a former world champion and currently ranked 18th, won 18-21 21-12 21-16 in a second-round match that lasted 63 minutes. This marks her first win over a top-10 player since defeating Han in the Malaysia Masters final in May. With this victory, Sindhu, who is currently working with Anup Sridhar and Lee Hyun-il, extended her head-to-head record against Han to 7 - 1 in eight encounters.



Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu

A finalist in the 2015 edition, Sindhu, the lone surviving Indian in the fray, will next face either Indonesia's Paris Olympic bronze medallist Gregoria Mariska Tunjung or Denmark's Mia Blichfeldt in only her third quarterfinals this year.

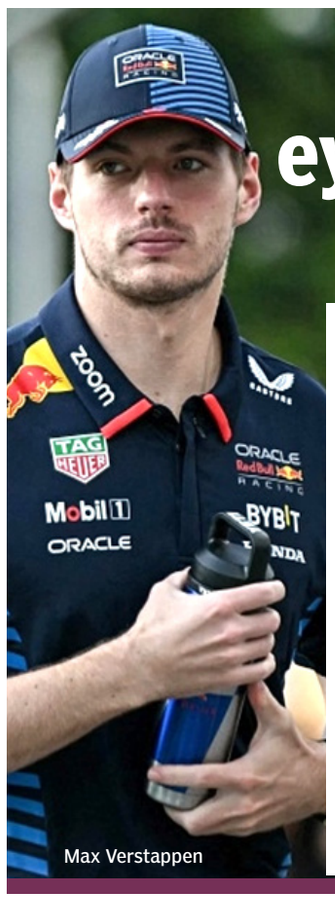
She had reached the last eight in the French Open and Spain Madrid Masters, apart from the finals in Malaysia. Sindhu, who returned medal-less from Paris for the first time in three Olympics.
—*PTI*

Bhullar top Indian tied in fifth place in Thailand

HUA HIN, 17 OCT

Gaganjeet Bhullar shot a superb 7-under 65 to be tied fifth in the first round of the USD 2 million Black Mountain Championship in Hua Hin, Thailand.

Bhullar, who began from the back nine, had eight birdies against one bogey on the first, which was his 10th hole. He once had three birdies in a row from the 16th to the 18th and then four in a row from the third to the sixth.Among other Indians, Honey Baisoya, Khalon Joshi, and Varun Chopra shot 68 each to be T-34th. —*PTI*



Max Verstappen

Max Verstappen eyes ending winless streak in Texas

PARIS, 17 OCT

Max Verstappen will seek to reboot his title defense and end an eight-race winless streak this weekend when he locks horns with title rival Lando Norris at the United States Grand Prix. Four weeks on from finishing second behind him in Singapore, Red Bull's three-time world champion and series leader hopes recent upgrades to his car will be enough for him to reel in the McLaren driver and repeat his 2023 triumph at the Circuit of the Americas.

"The car felt better in Singapore," said Verstappen. "It was already a good step for us in Baku and I think we are going in the right direction now, but it takes time. You can't change something like this in one or two weeks." The Dutchman admitted that Red Bull struggled to match the speed of their main competitors, McLaren, Ferrari, and Red Bull, during much of the mid-part of the 24-race season, but with six races remaining, three including additional sprints, he hopes his 52-point lead will be enough for him to hang on.

Verstappen has not won since the Spanish Grand Prix and Norris, despite some inconsistency, has beaten him in the last five races, igniting a late bid for the drivers' title to add to McLaren's takeover of the constructors' championship. —*AP*

Doping ban: Paul Pogba ready to give up money to play for Juventus

MILAN, 17 OCT

Paul Pogba says he's ready to give up money to play for Juventus again. The Serie A club may not want him, though, or need him.

Pogba recently had his four-year ban for doping reduced to 18 months after appealing to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, meaning the France World Cup winner will be free to resume his career in March 2025.

Juventus has not been overly enthusiastic about welcoming him back but Pogba says that is the only club he is thinking about playing for.

"I am ready to even give up money so that I can still play for Juve," he said in an interview with Italian sports daily Gazzetta dello Sport. "I want to return."

Juventus sporting director Cristiano Giuntoli and new coach Thiago Motta are dubious about whether Pogba can return to the top level after being out for so long since testing positive for testosterone in August last year.

Paul Pogba PHOTO: @PAULPOGBA

But the 31-year-old Pogba, who said he "felt like a caged lion" for the past year, has been training hard on his own and is ready to prove them wrong.

"I am a Juve player now. That is all I have in my mind today," he said. "I don't have to talk. What I do on the pitch will do my talking and then Thiago Motta will judge with his own eyes, based on what he sees.
—*PTI*

Trent-Arnold is priority transfer target

Real Madrid have identified Liverpool's Trent Alexander-Arnold as their top priority transfer target for next season. According to a report by The Athletic, Los Blancos will be aiming to bring in defensive reinforcements at the end of the ongoing season and are admirers of Trent, who is out of contract in June 2025. Alongside Trent, the team has also identified Tottenham Hotspur's Pedro Porro.

WILL COVER IPL & WPL

Ganguly is JSW Sports' cricket director

NEW DELHI, 17 OCT

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly was on Thursday appointed Director of Cricket for JSW Sports, his role covering all its cricketing properties including the Delhi team in the IPL and the WPL along with the Pretoria Capitals franchise in SA20.

JSW Sports and GMR Group co-own Delhi Capitals in the IPL and WPL (Women's Premier League) while Pretoria Capitals is owned solely by JSW Sports.

"In his role, Ganguly will spearhead all cricketing properties owned by JSW Sports, including the Delhi Capitals men's IPL and women's WPL teams, and the Pretoria Capitals that plays in the SA20 League in South Africa," said JSW Sports in a statement.

Ganguly joined Delhi Capitals in 2019 as an advisor, where he worked alongside coach Ricky Ponting, and later returned to the franchise as Director of Cricket after his stint as BCCI president.

Ganguly's appointment came soon after it was decided that the management of cricket operations for Delhi Capitals' teams in the IPL and the WPL would be handled in a two-year rotation policy between GMR Group and JSW Group.

The GMR Group will handle the operations of the Delhi Capitals in the IPL for the next two years, while JSW Sports will handle the franchise's team in the WPL. —*PTI*

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly PHOTO: PTI

Dale Steyn to leave SRH

Fast bowling great Dale Steyn has confirmed he will not return to the Indian Premier League side Sunrisers Hyderabad for the next edition as their bowling coach. However, the former South African pacer will continue with the franchise's other team in the SA20 competition, Sunrisers Eastern Cape, who have won both editions of the competition so far. "Cricket announcement. A big thank you to Sunrisers Hyderabad for my few years with them as bowling coach at the IPL.

Tuchel targets WC glory as England manager

LONDON, 17 OCT

Thomas Tuchel said he must rise to the challenge of ending England's wait for a first major trophy since 1966 as the German was unveiled as the new manager of the Three Lions on Wednesday. Former Chelsea boss Tuchel will start his new job on January 1, 2025, on an 18-month deal to the conclusion of the 2026 World Cup. The 51-year-old, who has been out of work since leaving Bayern Munich at the end of last season, succeeds Gareth Southgate as permanent coach and becomes the third foreign England manager after Sven-Goran Eriksson and Fabio Capello.

"I know that some trophies are missing in the federation and, of course, I want to help to make it happen," he told a press conference at Wembley.

Tuchel, who has also coached Borussia Dortmund and Paris Saint-Germain, has the trophy-winning pedigree that the FA is seeking to help end a 58-year wait to win a major tournament since the 1966 World Cup on home soil.

The highlight of the German's career to date came during his spell in English football when he won the Champions League with Chelsea in 2021. However, the FA's move has drawn criticism over their unwillingness to trust an Englishman with its top job, overseeing a richly-talented generation of players.
—*PTI*

Thomas Tuchel